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Local Government Service

JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

NO. 6 VOL. XXV JUNE 1948 THREEPENCE

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A ROYAL TRIBUTE

PRINCESS ELIZABETH paid a graceful tribute to the local government health services when she opened the "Health of the People" Exhibition at Marble Arch, London, on May 6.

Though some might wonder, as they looked at the world to-day whether the human race had made much progress, she said, none could doubt the outstanding improvement in public health, more marked in this country than in any other.

"To-day," the Princess pointed out, "five times as many children survive their infancy as in 1848; less than half as many mothers die in childbirth; and the expectation of life at birth has risen by 20 years. The death rate from tuberculosis is one-fifth of what it was in 1860, and there has been an equally remarkable decrease in deaths from most other dangerous diseases.

"There is no doubt," she continued, "that greater care, better conditions and such provisions as extra milk for children, are the firm basis on which our health as a nation is founded. And here I should like to pay tribute to the selfless day-to-day work of those men and women who are responsible for these achievements: the medical officer of health, the district nurse, the health visitor, the midwife, the sanitary inspector—to mention but some of those whose devotion to the public welfare, both in the practical and the educational field, can never receive too much recognition."

A Century of Progress

In the exhibition, the Princess saw a graphic and effectively displayed presentation of the progress of the services to which she had referred. Opening with a gruesome reproduction of a cellar-dwelling of 1848, in which no horror is spared save the bugs and the smell, the first section surveys the conditions of the industrial towns a century ago, their streets littered with garbage, their houses without water, boy chimney sweeps being dug out of the chimney in which they had become wedged, cholera, typhoid, smallpox, and other diseases taking a ghastly toll.

But reformers were already campaigning against these scandals, and the visitor sees something of the long fight waged by such men as Chadwick, Dr. Duncan in Liverpool, and Sir John Simon in London, often against the bitter opposition of employers and property-owners, for "the Sanitary Idea." Gradually, helped by the development of the germ theory of disease, the discovery of antiseptics, and a better understanding of the elements of hygiene and nutrition, the battle was won and the far-reaching health services of to-day were born.

These are shown in their relation to the "Average Family," each member surrounded by the health team which stands at his call—the medical officer of health with his attendant sanitary inspectors, health visitors, nurses, midwives, analysts; the family doctor and dentist with their modern diagnostic and treatment facilities, the army of experts—most of them local government officers—which safeguards the "Average" home, school and workplace, the water they drink and the food they eat.

It is a fascinating display, whose only drawback is that it closes on June 6, long before more than a fraction of London's millions will have seen it. But the historical section is to be sent on tour of half a dozen provincial cities, there to be supplemented, we trust, with equally enthralling demonstrations of the local health services.

Simplifying London's Government

THAT new health service, which the exhibition in part describes, will be in operation next month, though in many respects incomplete, and still beset by uncertainties. In London, its introduction is being made the occasion for a significant step towards the simplification of the structure of Metropolitan government.

The National Health Service Act transfers many health services from the boroughs to the county and requires the L.C.C. to prepare a scheme for their administration, including all those which concern the health of mothers and children.

With commendable farsightedness, the county council forebore to establish a centralised system and impose uniformity in the twenty-nine localities where widely differing systems now prevail; instead, it divided London into nine divisions, each consisting of a group of boroughs and having a population of between 250,000 and 500,000. In each division, there will be a local health committee responsible to the county health committee for the conduct of the health services and enjoying a generous autonomy. Working with and for the committees, there will be a divisional doctor, a chief administrative officer and a chief nursing officer, each with his staff, and functioning with a wide measure of independence of "County Hall."

Each divisional committee, though constitutionally a sub-committee of the county council, will contain only one third of county council members, the rest being nominees of the borough councils. Even the central health committee at County Hall is to contain a group of members whose names will be put forward by the borough councils.

The aim of the county council is threefold: to create areas big enough for convenient administration; to maintain local enthusiasm and interest; and to secure general unification on broad issues of policy. This is a major attempt to rationalise the relations between two tiers of local government, brought into being on the initiative of the authorities concerned.

Plain Words

"Whoever reads or spurns this book, one hopes that as many town clerks as possible will give it to their staffs, for to-day the local government official is far worse at writing English than his cousin in Whitehall, and the people with whom he corresponds are more easily perplexed by bad letters full of pseudo-legal terms or bejewelled with those easy phrases that fascinate an idle public servant."

Thus the "Manchester Guardian," in a recent leading article reviewing and commending "Plain Words," the book which SIR ERNEST GOWERS has written as a guide to the use of English for civil servants.

Though some may wish to challenge the "Guardian's" strictures on local government officers, none, we are sure, who reads the book will question the wisdom of its advice. Whether his writing be good or bad, there is no local government officer who would not both enjoy and benefit from it; while the expenditure of £20,000 on 200,000 copies to supply it to the whole service would be the most worthwhile ever made from the collective rate-funds of the country.

We welcome it with an especial warmth since we have, in our small way, consistently campaigned against the woolly, polysyllabic cliché-ridden language beloved of so many public servants, national and local, and for greater simplicity and clarity.

Sir Ernest does it with wit, vigour, and a wealth of horrid example and shrewd comment. But the book is more than a collection of warnings and prohibitions. Sir Ernest has much sound advice to give on letter-writing, the choice of words, the handling of words, punctuation, and all the other elements of that style which fulfils the definition of Cervantes with which he prefaces his book:

> "Do but take care to express yourself in a plain, easy manner, in well-chosen, significant and decent Terms, and to give a harmonious and pleasing Turn to your Periods: study to explain your Thoughts, and set them in the truest Light, labouring as much as possible, not to leave them dark nor intricate, but clear and intelligible."

Whether his town clerk buys it for him or not, every local government officer should get and read "Plain Words." He will find it stimulating, amusing—and humbling. And if he acts upon its advice, he will find his thought clearer, his work more efficient, and his actions better understood.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in this journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

Not Whitleyism, nor Weakness, but Failure to Use its Strength is Holding N A L G O Back!

By "CRITIC"

Discussing, in this article, the current criticism of N A L G O's failure to win satisfaction for all its claims, "Critic" concludes that the main reason is not any defect of the machinery of negotiation, nor weakness, but timidity in using the powerful weapons of propaganda and the black-list which lie to the Association's hand.

THERE are two ways of ending a dispute between contestants holding strong views on matters of vital principle; the annihilation of one side or, at some stage, an agreement to bargain and compromise. Slowly through the centuries, and with some lapses, we in England have learned that the annihilation of the opposition is not wise; it weakens the body politic and it may turn out later that there was, after all, some merit in the opposition view.

We have learned also that it is unwise for the victorious partner in a dispute to impose terms on the vanquished that are so onerous that they seem intolerable and create a bitterness that does not heal. We have learned that if we are to live together on a small island we must conciliate and compromise.

A generation ago, it seemed that the tolerant view would soon be universally accepted; now increasingly in the world the annihilation of political opponents is accepted as natural and proper. So far, we have preserved our toleration and, in our social atmosphere, Whitleyism naturally is acceptable. Furthermore, compromise appeals particularly to local goverment officers, who are occupied with keeping the machinery of administration working smoothly in spite of social upheavals and, by temperament and training, are little concerned with the ultimate ideal or the last ditch.

Why the Dissatisfaction?

But if Whitleyism is almost indigenous to the sphere of local government, why the spate of dissatisfaction and criticism with our Whitley machinery so very soon after we have achieved a comprehensive system of joint bargaining?

The essence of a bargain is that neither side achieves all that it bargains for; but the bargain must be acceptable to both sides. The most successful bargain is likely to be made when two well-matched opponents have each assessed the other's strength and his own points of weakness; each is then prepared to be realistic. But if one opponent either has no weapons or is not prepared to use them, the outcome will not be a bargain and a compromise; it is more likely to be unconditional surrender, and Whitleyism will make no difference to that result.

What are N A L G O's weapons in its struggles for its members? Being a trade union, it has to hand three weapons available to all trade unions. Firstly, of course, the strike: crude, dangerous and double-edged. It was the first instinctive reaction of the exploited worker; but was often suicidal. N A L G O, a very junior member of the trade union family, profited in that as in other ways from the struggles of its elders and has never been tempted to use the strike weapon. Moreover, the local government officer is not temperamentally fitted to handle it: perhaps he lacks both the stupidity and the heroism for such a grand gesture.

The second weapon in the trade union armoury is that of agitation, demonstration, and propaganda Here, too, the local government officer has been strangely reluctant to act. He has been as nervous of the demonstration march as of the picket line and with less reason. Agitation will not in itself achieve victory, but it can certainly pave the way, even if it only heartens one's own side and causes tremors among the opposition.

In the less strident propaganda of persuasion. N A L G O has done more, but has been reluctant to go all out, and has not yet come in sight of the ideal of persuading the community that the interests of N A L G O members are identical with the interests of the community. How successful such propaganda can be has been proved by, among others, the powerful teachers' organisations who, by their broad and active interest in educational reform, have certainly achieved the impression that the material interests of the teachers are coincidental with progress in education itself. For example, state schools are closed for a quarter of the year, which is nice for the teachers; what is not by any means so certain, though it is virtually unchallenged, is the assumption that three long holidays a year, one of them of six or seven weeks' duration, are also in the best interests of the instruction of the children, or in accordance with the wishes of their parents. N A L G O has certainly a long way to go in the technique of persuasion!

Finally, a trade union may, without even the threat of a strike, and without a planned public relations policy, so organise and discipline its workers that it can prevent a recalcitrant employer from securing the services of suitably qualified staff simply by advising all members of the union, who are the only persons whose qualifications are accepted, to refrain from responding to the employer's advertisement for staff. The British Medical Association has proved how powerful this weapon can be, but it is one that N A L G O has hardly begun to forge.

Handicapped by Our Weakness

If, then, of the three weapons a trade union can wield, the strike, agitation and propaganda, and the black-list, N A L G O has eschewed the first, been timid in using the second, and has not yet developed the third, what sort of a position are we in to bargain with the employers through the Whitley or any other machinery?

At the moment, we are handicapped by our weakness in bargaining power, and there is an obvious tendency to criticise the machinery of Whitleyism when the results of negotiation are the reflection of that weakness. If, for example, the employers—faced with an overwhelmingly strong case from the staff side on a particular issue—know that they can postpone a decision indefinitely without untoward consequences, is it any wonder that the machinery works slowly when dealing with that issue? And so we find that an entrant to local government from the secondary school who, during his school years was felt to need thirteen weeks' holiday, presumably in the interests of his health, is granted a bare twelve days in which to recover from the strain of his first year in full employment in local government; and there is no indication that the Whitley machinery will be brought to serious consideration of that question in the measurable future. In fact, at present, we get decisions only on issues which the employers want decided.

The only major achievement of our newly re-constituted Whitley machinery is the Charter, and we got that because the more enlightened local authority representatives recognised that, if local government were to survive, some uniformity of standards had to be imposed on the chaos; but they were determined to see that the standards were lower than we thought reasonable. The fact that the Charter standards represented some gains to the majority of our members should not delude us about our strength or our prospects of future success. The Charter was negotiated during a period of full employment, when standards for employees were rising and the tide was with us; it is questionable if we got the full benefit of that favourable situation.

That is not a criticism of our representatives; if it had not been for their skilled and tenacious negotiations over a period of eighteen months we should have had uniformity at a lower level. It is possible that the tide may turn, and that will be the real testing-time for our Whitley machinery and for our own strength.

We are Strong—if We Use Our Strength

It should be remembered also that a speeding up of the Whitley machinery may produce quicker results, but not necessarily better ones. In fact, if we should pass into a period when wage standards are being lowered, we should no doubt find it easy enough to get speedy decisions, though not to our advantage. The negotiating machinery certainly needs some rationalisation, but we must strengthen our organisation to make better use of it.

N A L G O is, in fact, basically in a strong position if we but use our strength to the best advantage. We are in undisputed possession of our own trade union territory and we represent all grades. Any union which, without vertical or horizontal division, represents the staffs of a service essential to the life of the community is, for that reason alone, in a good position to use its strength. Our complex modern community could not function for a day without its public services, though we have not fully succeeded yet in making the public appreciate the fact.

Nevertheless, it does place us in a position from which we can use the weapon of agitation and persuasion more lustily than we have done in the past. As we develop our standards of recruitment and qualification, we shall increasingly be in a position to demand salaries and service conditions commensurate with those standards, and to bring to heel authorities that are evading them in the way in which many authorities that have adopted the Charter are, in practice, undoubtedly evading many of its provisions to-day.

Finally, there is every indication of vitality in our Association. In nearly 300 Conference motions and amendments there is plenty of evidence of dissatisfaction, annoyance, and even rage, but none of acquiescence nor despair; and even petulance, though not a constructive nor even an intelligent reaction, is a sign of life.

In short, Whitleyism may be the path to the promised land, but only our own strength, fortitude, and endurance will get us there.

BREAD AND BUTTER SERIES.—No. 2

Whitleyism in Local Government—What It Is, How It Works, and What It Has Done

This, the second of a new series of articles designed to meet members' demand for more general information about NALGO's trade union affairs, describes the machinery of Whitleyism, reviews its achievements, and analyses its shortcomings.

VETERAN NALGO negotiators fought for thirty years for the recognition of Whitley methods in settling the salaries and conditions of local government officers.

The story of their struggle began in 1916, when J. H. WHITLEY—later Speaker of the House of Commons—was appointed by the Government to lead an inquiry into means of avoiding industrial strife and preventing the strikes which were endangering the nation's war effort. His committee recommended that, in place of the haphazard, piecemeal, and catch-as-catch-can methods of fixing wages and conditions then in force, leading to countless anomalies and much unrest, there should be substituted a more orderly system under which terms of employment would be negotiated in each industry, trade, or occupational group by joint councils composed of equal numbers of representatives of all or most of the employers and workers concerned.

The idea, soon called "Whitleyism," caught on. The Government adopted it for civil servants, and many industries followed suit. It was popular with both sides. It offered the worker the prospect of uniform conditions and a square deal, with fewer anomalies, and the employer a happy and co-operative staff. It helped each side understand the other's point of view.

NALGO leaders welcomed it as a means by which local government officers might escape from the chaos of widely varying rates of pay and conditions under which they were employed, for in those days each local authority was absolute master in its own house, most officers seeking some improvement had to go cap-in-hand to their employers, and the only approach to uniformity lay in the fact that salaries were uniformly bad.

First Councils Formed

Recognising that joint negotiation would give their staff a voice in improving these conditions, the local authorities were less enthusiastic about Whitleyism than were their officers. Nevertheless, it struck root in many areas, and between 1920 and 1923, Whitley councils were formed in South Wales, London, West Midlands, West Riding, North Eastern, and Lancashire and Cheshire.

But in most of these areas the plant proved a sickly growth, and by 1933 it had survived only in London, Lancashire and Cheshire, and the West Riding. In that year, NALGO's annual Conference called for a "complete system of Whitley councils to cover the whole country" and successive Conferences renewed the claim almost every year thereafter.

But progress was painfully slow by comparison with the speedy and almost frictionless inauguration of the new councils set up in the past year for public utility staffs. In the electricity industry to-day there is but one employer—the national authority—and NALGO had no need to preach Whitleyism to it. But the pioneers in local government negotiations had to convince not one employer but 1,500 separate local authorities, few of whom wanted to be convinced. Nevertheless, as the result of patient missionary effort, by 1938 another five provincial councils had been established, and seven more were in process of formation. By 1940, the whole country was covered by a system of provincial councils—although only one local authority in three was represented on those councils.

The turning point in the road to recognition came when, in 1940, the Government, repeating the example of 1916, sought to aid the war effort by measures to hasten the settlement of disputes. In effect, those measures amounted to a reaffirmation and endorsement of Whitleyism and the establishment of machinery—the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order—to enforce agreements reached by Whitley councils. Faced with the prospect that they would be required to observe the decisions of Whitley councils on which they were not represented, many of the local authorities still standing outside the machinery, decided to come in, and between 1940 and 1943 the local authority membership of provincial councils rose from 553 to 728.

The National Council

At the same time, NALGO repeatedly invited the associations of local authorities to join the local authority representatives from provincial councils in forming the employers' side of a new and comprehensive National Joint Council. At first they were reluctant, but eventually, under strong pressure from the Minister of Health, they decided to do so, and on January 13, 1944, the National Joint Council was reconstituted in its present form. It consists of 60 members, sitting under an independent chairman—Sir Horace Wilson, formery Head of the Civil Service—appointed by the Minister of Health. The employers' side of 30 members is composed of six representatives of the Association of Municipal Corporations, five of the County Councils' Association, two of the Urban District Councils' Association, and one each of the Rural District Councils' Association and the Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee, together with 15 members each appointed by and from the employers' side of one of the 15 provincial councils. The 30 members of the staff side consist of eight representatives appointed by NALGO, three by the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, two by the National Union of Public Employees, and one each by the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Confederation of Health Services Employees, together with 15 representatives each appointed by the staff side of one of the provincial councils. Since all 15 provincial council representatives are NALGO members (most of them being also members of the Association's National Executive Council) the Association has, in fact, 23 representatives on the staff side, giving it a dominating voice. There are two secretaries, one appointed by the employers and one by the staff side: the latter is HADEN CORSER, NALGO's deputy general secretary.

Functions and Scope

The functions of the council are "to secure the largest possible measure of joint action for the consideration of salaries, wages, and service conditions of administrative, professional, technical, and clerical staffs employed by local authorities and to consider such proposals in reference to these matters as are submitted to it from time to time by the provincial councils." Specific objects within this definition include:

Regular consideration of salaries, wages and service conditions;
Measures for securing recognition by all local authorities and officers of agreements relating to salaries, wages, and service conditions;
Prevention of disputes and settlement of differences between employers' and staff sides of a provincial council or between a local authority and its officers;
Collection of statistics and information about the service;
Encouragement of the study of administration;
Health and welfare work;
Entry into and training for the service, and co-operation with educational authorities in arranging educational facilities;
Measures to persuade local authorities and their officers to become or remain members of the appropriate provincial council or officers' association, and to secure the loyal observance by them of collective agreements; and
Co-operation with other Whitley councils on questions of common interest.

The scope of the council covers all the full-time administrative, professional, technical, and clerical officers of local authorities in England and Wales with the exception of clerks to local authorities and officers for whom a joint industrial council or similar body exists. When the constitution of the council was agreed, the officers with salaries above £700 a year were also excluded in respect of the fixation of salaries only—although there was provision that the council might consider their salaries, and the salaries and service conditions of clerks to local authorities, should the local authorities and the officers concerned make joint submission to it. When cost-of-living bonus was consolidated with salaries last January, this salary ceiling was raised to £760, and last month it was raised again to £1,000, with provision for two separate negotiating bodies to consider the salaries of clerks to local authorities and officers earning more than £1,000. A parallel Whitley council, with similar functions, has been set up in Scotland.

The National Whitley Council may meet as often as necessary, and in practice meets about four times a year. Either side, or a provincial council, may submit items for its agenda. The council's usual procedure in dealing with submissions is to refer them to an executive committee composed of 14 members of each side, which endeavours to agree on a recommendation, which then goes to the full council for approval. The council has power to appoint other standing or sectional committees, but has hitherto made little use of it. It has, however, an appeals committee and what amount to advisory sub-committees for transport administrators, masters and matrons, and hospital stewards and institution officers.

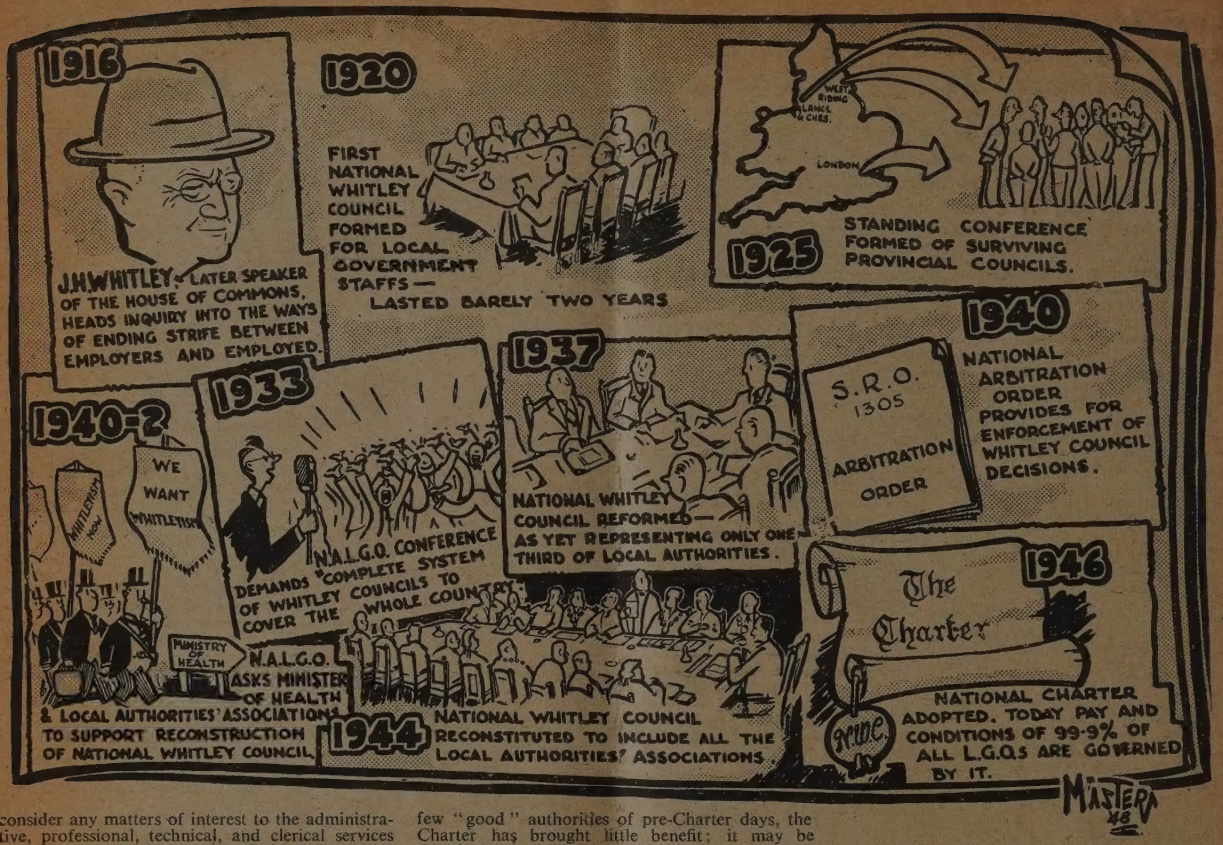
Agreement by Compromise

An important point of procedure which is probably not appreciated by many members is that no resolution submitted to the council can be adopted unless it is approved by a majority of *each* side. If, for example, the staff side submits a proposal, votes unanimously for it, and persuades 14 employers' representatives to vote for it, too, while 16 employers' representatives vote against it, the resolution cannot be carried; and the same principle, of course, applies to resolutions submitted by the employers. It is therefore essential for each side to win the support of a majority of the other side to any proposal which it wishes the council to adopt—and this can usually be done only by compromise, each side giving way on one point in order to gain another. That is why the staff side rarely secures its objects in exactly the form in which it presents them: it must modify and give way here and there to secure agreement. The same argument, of course, applies to the employers, who often must modify their own proposals to secure the approval of the staff side.

When the two sides fail to agree either can, if it wishes, report the dispute to the Minister of Labour with the request that it be submitted to the National Arbitration Tribunal, or, if both prefer it, to the Industrial Court. The recent bonus claim was referred to the tribunal for settlement, at the request of both sides.

The machinery of the provincial council is broadly similar. It consists of an equal number of representatives of employers and officers within the provincial council's area, but there is no independent chairman, each side electing a chairman in turn. When the chairman is elected by the employers, the vice-chairman is elected by the staff side, and vice versa. The primary function of the provincial council is to take executive action in its area to give effect to the decisions of the National Council (but it may not modify those decisions) and to undertake functions delegated to it by the National Council: it may also make recommendations to the National Council. In addition, the provincial council may

A WHITLEY SCRAPBOOK


1916
J.H. WHITLEY — LATER SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, HEADS INQUIRY INTO THE WAYS OF ENDING STRIFE BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED.
1920
FIRST NATIONAL WHITLEY COUNCIL FORMED FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFFS — LASTED BARELY TWO YEARS
1925
STANDING CONFERENCE FORMED OF SURVIVING PROVINCIAL COUNCILS.
1933
N.A.L.G.O. CONFERENCE DEMANDS "COMPLETE SYSTEM OF WHITLEY COUNCILS TO COVER THE WHOLE COUNTRY."
1937
NATIONAL WHITLEY COUNCIL REFORMED — AS YET REPRESENTING ONLY ONE THIRD OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES.
1940
S.R.O. 1305 ARBITRATION ORDER
NATIONAL ARBITRATION ORDER PROVIDES FOR ENFORCEMENT OF WHITLEY COUNCIL DECISIONS.
1940-2
WE WANT WHITLEY
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
N.A.L.G.O. ASKS MINISTER OF HEALTH & LOCAL AUTHORITIES' ASSOCIATIONS TO SUPPORT RECONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL WHITLEY COUNCIL
1944
NATIONAL WHITLEY COUNCIL RECONSTITUTED TO INCLUDE ALL THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES' ASSOCIATIONS.
1946
The Charter
NATIONAL CHARTER ADOPTED. TODAY PAY AND CONDITIONS OF 99·9% OF ALL L.G.O.s ARE GOVERNED BY IT.
MASTERS

consider any matters of interest to the administrative, professional, technical, and clerical services in its area, including hours, salaries, and service conditions, encouragement of the study of administration, lectures and conferences on subjects of general interest to the service, and health and welfare work—but it may not take executive action or any of these matters without the approval of the National Council. This requirement does not, however, apply to the settlement of differences, in which the provincial council can act independently, without reference to the National Council. In the event of a dispute between a local authority and its officers in the provincial area, the provincial council may act as a conciliation board at the request of either party, investigate the facts, make recommendations and, generally, use all available means to promote a settlement. Should it fail, the dispute must be submitted to the National Council for decision.

The National Charter

First achievement of the newly reconstituted National Whitley Council was the formulation of the national scheme of salaries and service conditions, known as the Charter, which was finally approved, after long and hard-fought negotiation between the two sides, on January 31, 1946—only two years after the council was re-formed. The Charter has been severely criticised by many members of NALGO, but in condemning its defects, the critics often fail to appreciate its benefits. It, and the parallel Charter agreed a few months later for Scotland, established, for the first time in the history of British local government, a standard system of salaries and service conditions applicable to the officers of every local authority in the country. Instead of more than 2,000 separate codes of salaries and conditions of service, there was now a single code, which to-day is observed by practically all local authorities and applies to more than 99 per cent. of all local government officers—a code, moreover, which is enforceable, through the National Arbitration Tribunal, against every local authority which refuses to apply it. It may be that for a minority of officers, employed by the few "good" authorities of pre-Charter days, the Charter has brought little benefit; it may be that for more it has brought less than they had hoped; but against this must be set the fact that for the vast majority of officers, employed by the bulk of local authorities, the Charter has meant great improvements in salaries, in holidays, and in conditions of service generally. More important still, it has gone a long way to bring uniformity of standards where before there was a chaos of widely differing standards, and to provide a foundation upon which further improvement may be made. And, most important of all, it has ensured adoption of every improvement agreed by the National Council. What this means may be illustrated by two examples:

1. On September 5, 1939—two days after the outbreak of war—Parliament passed the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, empowering local authorities to make up to civil level the pay of their staffs serving in the forces. Twelve months later, only 450 out of the 1,530 local authorities in England and Wales had agreed to make up service pay in full—and LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE published a list of no fewer than 106 local authorities which had refused to do anything.

2. On January 23, 1940, the National Whitley Council (the body existing before reconstitution) adopted the first cost-of-living bonus. Twelve months later, only 280 local authorities in England and Wales had adopted the council's recommendations in full, 106 had adopted the scale with modification, 372 had adopted other scales, and 772 had granted no bonus.

Compare that with the position to-day, when decisions of the National Whitley Council are adopted automatically and speedily by the vast majority of local authorities—of whom, in England and Wales, 1,309 out of 1,530 are now constituent members of provincial councils.

The Whitley system in local government is not perfect. Many complain that it produces too little and takes too long to do it. Twice last year, NALGO's National Executive Council deplored "the long delay in securing decisions through the National Joint Council." Members of the Metropolitan district, at a mass meeting in February, condemned what was described as "the manœuvres and delaying tactics" of the employers' side, and several branches have accused the staff side of weakness in face of the employers.

There is, of course, no time limit on Whitleyism negotiations. Whitleyism is an agreement to bargain—not a weapon for forcing the will of one side upon the other. The rule that a motion cannot be adopted unless it has the support of a majority on each side ensures that all resolutions of the council are almost certain to be accepted by authorities and officers alike; but it makes the council an easy victim to a veto from the employers' side when salary increases are proposed—and equally, of course, from the staff side when wage reductions are in the air. It is also productive of delay, for if the staff side fails to convince a majority of the employers of the justice of its claims, the only course open to it is to raise the matter again, submitting, if it can, new facts and further arguments, or conceding a point or two in its claim. Should this bring no answering concession from the other side and deadlock result, what then? The answer is that, apart from arbitration or a strike, little can be done.

The Only Alternatives

Another cause of delay is the fact that the National Council meets so infrequently. Failure to agree at one meeting may mean postponement of the claim for three months or (if it is referred to the executive committee in the hope that a smaller body may find it easier to negotiate on a complicated issue) six months and even longer. This, unfortunately, is inevitable. Most of the members of the employers' side are members of local authorities, voluntary workers in local government, with jobs of their own to attend to as well as the work of their councils; they cannot be expected to spend two or three nights in London at frequent intervals.

In view of these weaknesses, is the National Joint Council worth preserving? There can be no

N.J.C. AGREES TO RAISE CHARTER SALARY "CEILING"

New Grades will go up to £1,000 | Machinery to Fix Scales for Chiefs | Higher London "Weighting" | Promotion Bar Concession

DECISIONS on extending the local government Charter salary scales to £1,000 a year, on negotiating machinery for chief officers, on London "weighting," and on modification of the "promotion bar," were reached at a meeting of the National Whitley Council for local government staffs on April 28.

At present, the Charter salary scales extend only to £760 a year, and the National Council has no authority to consider or recommend salaries above this figure. It has now agreed to amend its Constitution to allow it to lay down scales up to £1,000, and negotiations are to begin soon on grades between £760 and £1,000.

In addition, the Council agreed to the establishment of two joint negotiating committees to settle the salaries and conditions of senior officers. The first committee will deal with all clerks to local authorities (except county councils), whatever their salaries; and the second with

(a) accountants and treasurers, engineers and surveyors, chief education officers, and architects, and

(b) all officers with salaries above £1,000 a year inclusive.

Other chief officers with salaries above £1,000 may (as such) be brought within the scope of the second committee if the bodies concerned, including NALGO (which has two seats on the committee) agree.

London "Weighting"

The long-awaited decision on London "weighting" provides for the following new scales, which are the same for men and women, and apply to all grades:

Age 16 to 20—£10 per annum;
Age 21 to 25—£20 per annum;
Age 26 and over—£30 per annum.

The effect is to give women equality with men in the General Division, an extra £14 to women and £10 to men over 26 in the Clerical and Higher Clerical Divisions, and an extra £10 to all over 26 in A.P.T. grades.

The staff side had claimed £15 at 16 to 20, £30 at 21 to 25, and £45 at 26 and over, emphasising, in support, the high cost of living in London and the "weighting" of £36 a year given to teachers, increased to £48 after 16 years' service, or on attaining the age of 37, whichever was the earlier.

The employers, however, refused to accept the staffs' figures on cost of living in London and pointed out that the teachers' "weighting" was exceptional, being far greater than that of any other comparable body of officials, and did not justify the increase claimed for local government officers. In support of their arguments, they pointed out that the civil service "weighting" was on a variable scale, ranging between £10 on salaries up to £265, £20 on salaries between £292 and £430, and £30 on salaries between £457 and £720. The "weighting" for bank officers was not so high as this, and in no case, so far as was known, exceeded £25 for men or women over 21.

Although the compromise finally agreed falls short of members' expectations and the staff side claim, it does get rid of the former differences between men and women in the General and Clerical Divisions, and of the anomaly under which officers in Clerical and A.P.T. Divisions got £10 less than those aged between 26 and 30 in the General Division.

Promotion Bar

The employers deferred to the next meeting of the Council consideration of the staff side request that, to overcome the hardships now being caused to many officers, paragraph 28 of the Charter (which restricts promotion from the General Division to those who have passed the promotion examination or a recognised alternative) should be suspended.

The staff side also asked that a General Division officer aged 35 or over on March 31 last, and with 15 years' service, should be permanently exempt from the promotion bar. The employers would not go so far, but agreed that the bar should be lifted to the extent that the officer aged 35 or over on April 1, 1946, and with 15 years' service, should be eligible for promotion to the Clerical and Higher Clerical Divisions without having to pass the promotion or an equivalent examination. These examinations will still be required as the passport for promotion to the A.P.T. grades, but the staff side will continue to press for further concessions for the older officers.

Other decisions of the Council included:

Overtime Increases—From January 1, 1948, overtime is to be calculated on consolidated salary, instead of on the former basic salary, and the limit above which overtime is not payable is raised from £435 to £495.

Annual Leave—As a result of the consolidation award, the salary figure above which an officer's leave is at the discretion of the authority (paragraph 11 of the Charter) and he becomes entitled to first-class travel on business (paragraph 19) is to be raised from £700 to £760, and that above which the local authority may waive the system of annual reports on the officer's competence is to be raised from £500 to £560.

Work in Higher Grade—At a previous meeting, the Council decided that where an officer was required temporarily to occupy a higher graded post for a reason other than sickness or leave, he should be paid the minimum salary for the grade applicable to that post. In response to queries on the effect of this decision, the Council has now ruled that:

The officer occupying a higher-graded post shall be paid the minimum of the grade immediately, without being required to serve for a qualifying period;

When a woman occupies temporarily a post normally held by a man, she shall be paid the minimum of the woman's rate for his grade (if it differs from the man's rate); and

Where a man occupies temporarily a post normally held by a woman, he shall be paid the minimum of the man's rate for her grade (if it differs from the woman's rate).

Classification of Officers—Local authorities may themselves determine the classification, as officer or workman, of depot clerks, timekeepers, storekeepers, and so on, according to circumstances and subject to any agreement made by appropriate joint councils.

Sickness on Leave—Where an officer falls ill on annual leave, that leave is suspended from the date of the medical certificate submitted.

Road Passenger Transport—The scheme for inspectorate and other special grades has been amended to provide that:

Revenue cash clerks—those collecting conductors' cash—and depot clerks—those booking staff on and off duty and ensuring that vehicles are manned and leave the depot according to schedule—shall be graded within either the transport inspectorate grades or the Charter General and Clerical Divisions, according to duties and responsibilities. Ticket clerks will be graded within Charter General or Clerical Divisions, also according to duties and responsibilities.

Consolidation for Resident Officers—Proposals for the consolidation of the salary and bonus of certain resident officers, and officers enjoying emoluments are to take effect retrospectively from January 1, 1948. The general effect is as follows:

1. For superintendents and matrons of children's homes, masters and non-nursing matrons of public assistance institutions, hospital stewards, and officers of hospitals and institutions enjoying free apartments and rations in addition to salary—consolidation into the basic salary of £30 for men and £25 for women;

2. For officers of hospitals and institutions enjoying free apartments only or rations only in addition to salary—consolidation into the basic salary of £40 for men and £33 6s. 8d. for women;

3. For officers enjoying the following emoluments—house only, consolidation into salary of £60 (women £50); 'house with light, water and heat, £50 (women, £41 13s. 4d.); and house with light, water and heat, and two meals daily, £45 (women, £37 10s.).

The calculation of superannuation payments and allowances for all such officers will be unaffected since, for this purpose—and for this purpose alone—a compensatory sum will be added to the value of their emoluments. This sum will equal the difference between the amount consolidated into salary and the full bonus (£60 for men and £50 for women) upon which superannuation had hitherto been calculated.

Continued from preceding page

doubt that it is—for the only alternatives are negotiation, without regular consultation, with strong employers' associations, or a return to the old system of individual negotiation with 1,530 separate local authorities, which was even slower and much less satisfactory.

Nor is the council so slow and unproductive as is often thought. In addition to those achievements reported elsewhere on this page, it has, within little more than twelve months:

Agreed new scales for registration officers and improved ones for masters and matrons of public assistance institutions and superintendents and matrons of children's homes;

Recommended grading for home teachers of the blind;

Laid down scales for transport inspectors;

Produced a promotion examination syllabus, made arrangements for holding the examination, and drawn up a list of recognised alternatives;

Taken a protracted dispute on consolidation of salaries and bonus to arbitration;

Approved a scheme for motor-car allowances and for the assisted purchase of car;

Created a new A.P.T. grade, Va, and increased overtime payments for juniors;

Given rulings on leave for examinations, the operation of the "carry over" clause as it affects hospital and institution officers, pay of part-time staffs, increases for those temporarily undertaking extra work, service in the auxiliary forces, appeals procedure, and recognition of temporary service for sick pay;

Heard and determined appeals affecting the grading of officers in nearly 100 authorities; and

Settled differences referred to it by the Minister of Labour under the Conditions of Employment and Arbitration Order.

This was no mean achievement for any Whitley council—for it must be remembered that there are many more, and that all possess similar weaknesses and encounter similar criticism.

This is not to say that the present position must be accepted. NALGO's N.E.C. believes that the procedure could be materially speeded up, and has submitted to the council proposals designed to do that. They included:

Appointment of standing committees to deal with matters of detail, instead of requiring the executive committee to deal with nearly every topic, however complicated;

Strict observance by the council and its committees of a pre-determined time table; and

Wider use of substitutes for members unable to attend any meeting.

These suggestions may not exhaust the possibilities. The standing committees might, for instance, be given power to act without reference to the full council.

But however highly tuned the machine may become, the path of the staff side is unlikely to be made much easier. The employers have recently set up a Conditions of Service Advisory Board, which will collect information about salaries and conditions in local government and outside it, co-ordinate the employers' side policy of all the joint negotiating bodies covering local government employees, both salaried and manual, and provide advice on staff problems for any authority needing it. The existence of this body will powerfully equip the employers to meet the claims of the staff side—and it can be regarded as certain that only claims which are fully justified with argument and evidence will be likely of acceptance.

First Gas Staffs Conference Calls for Advance on "Miserable" New Scales

MEETING at NALGO Headquarters on May 1, the first national conference of the gas industry officers heard from J. E. N. DAVIS, chief organisation officer and staff-side secretary of the National Joint Council for Gas Staffs, why the Association accepted the "miserable" scales agreed in April for men clerical and administrative workers.

As was reported in the May "L.G.S.," the scales range from £135 at 16 to a maximum of £290 at 25 for officers in "A1" undertakings, and from £120 at 16 to £275 at 25 for officers in "A2" undertakings, with a "no detriment" clause protecting the salaries of officers now getting more than these figures.

The staff side, said Mr. Davis, had asked for scales equivalent to those in the local government Charter, with an average increase of £50 for all officers graded within them, and put the case with dogged persistence. But the employers would not consider the claim; the scales finally agreed were the limit to which they would go. The staff side had either to refuse them and get nothing, or accept them and get some improvement for the lowest-paid staffs. He thought they had been wise to take what they could get.

"Threat to Negotiations"

T. FERNLEY, **N. Western**, disagreed with Mr. Davis' view, declaring that £290 at 25 was a threat to future negotiations: the staff side should have refused to accept the scales, in the hope of getting something better later. J. B. PARRY, **S. Wales**, suggested that it would be unreasonable, after nationalisation, to have two scales, one for those covered by the "no detriment" clause, and one for company staffs on the new scales. But NALGO had already agreed to two scales in that sense. Was that to be its permanent policy?

Mr. Davis replied that it was not. He thought that varying standards, after nationalisation, would cause friction all over the country. Asked by what criterion undertakings were to be listed as A1 or A2, he said that the district joint council would decide.

L. A. GARRETT, **E. Midlands**, reported that the Midland Regional Federation of Gas Employers had a scale for workmen in which undertakings were graded as A1, A2, B, C, D, and E. He hoped that that would not be taken as a guide by those settling conditions after nationalisation.

L. BEVAN, N.E.C., chairman, replied that the employers had wanted three grades—A1, A2 and A3—for clerical and administrative staffs in the provinces, but had agreed to two as a concession to the staff side. V. J. LUCK, organising officer, added that the employers had argued that undertakings must be graded because many small ones could not afford to pay as much as the larger, to which S. H. MILES, **Southern**, said that he could well believe it: many small undertakings were 50 years behind the times.

The conference recorded its view that the scales agreed were inadequate, endorsed the action of the staff side in accepting them, and urged the staff side to press for scales "not less favourable" than Charter rates.

Negotiations Simplified

W. C. ANDERSON, NALGO's legal officer, reported that the provisions of the Gas Bill affecting staffs followed closely those of the Electricity Act, 1947, with the result that the action taken by the Association to secure amendment and clarification of the Electricity Act had simplified its representations on the Gas Bill. For example, clause 17 of the Bill provided for the transfer of gas undertakings to area boards, but not specifically for the transfer of their officers. The Minister, however, had declared that a clause in the Electricity Act, with identical wording, did provide for the transfer of officers.

Again, clause 18 (1) of the Bill provided for the transfer of local authorities' gas undertakings. There was a similar clause in the Electricity Act, and when the Association had suggested that it should be amended to provide that officers engaged or mainly engaged on such undertakings should be transferred with them, the Minister had replied that officers' transfers could be dealt with better by regulations than by amendment of the Bill.

Clause 21 of the Gas Bill gave a Board power to disclaim agreements made or varied after November 19, 1945, which it considered were not reasonably necessary or were unreasonably imprudent. A parallel clause in the Electricity Bill was challenged on the ground that it appeared to be wide enough to cover variations of salary made as a result of the Charter, but the Minister had replied that he would be surprised if anyone should consider that an agreement to engage and employ workers at the trade union rate could be regarded as an agreement entered into with an unreasonable lack of prudence. All these statements were thought to reflect the Minister's attitude to clauses of the Gas Bill.

Clause 51 empowered the Minister to appoint competent and impartial persons as meter examiners. NALGO contended that existing gas-meter testing staffs employed in the weights and measures departments of local authorities might be adversely affected; had urged that they should be covered by the compensation provisions of the Bill; and had asked the Minister to respect their claim when making appointments. To this the Minister had given an assurance that an amendment would be put down to cover those points, and if, when drafted, it did not fully meet the objections, there could be further discussions.

C. I. POYNER, **S. Western**, reported that the members of Gloucester Gas Light Company's profit-sharing and savings scheme had protested against clause 56, which provides for the winding-up of co-partnership schemes. They had been assured by the Minister that everything co-partnership provided could be obtained under the Bill. If the workers demanded schemes similar to existing co-partnership schemes, there was no reason why they should not be negotiated.

Superannuation Plea

F. WETHERILL, **N. Eastern**, asked that the pension prospects of officers, transferring from an authority which had indicated its intention of granting them superannuation calculated at not less than sixtieths for non-contributing service, should not be impaired on transfer.

Mr. Anderson stated that representations on this point to be made for electricity staffs would undoubtedly form a precedent to be followed on the nationalisation of the gas industry. He referred again to what had been done for electricity staffs. They were to choose whether to stay subject to a pensions scheme to which they had subscribed before nationalisation or join a new one which was to be drafted by the British Electricity Authority and upon which the unions concerned were to be consulted.

Replying to a complaint that many whole-time officers who devoted part of their time to the affairs of a gas undertaking still did not know whether they would be transferred or not, Mr. Anderson said that the easiest solution lay in the hands of the local authorities, who should be asked to nominate those who were to be transferred. For example, where there were twelve officers devoting one-third of their time to gas business, four might be named for transfer and the others for absorption into other work of the authority.

It was also reported that NALGO was to inquire how emoluments, such as free rent and coal, were to be treated after nationalisation; scales for women in the London area had reached the working-party stage; and three of NALGO's seats on the N.J.C. were, in future, to be filled by NALGO staff and four by representatives selected by the service conditions committee from the nominations of district consultative committees.

New Scales for London "Slightly Better"

NEW scales approved last month by the London regional joint council for male clerical and administrative employees are slightly better than those agreed for provincial staffs, and cover staffs in higher grades than General Division (the fixing of which, in the provinces, has been left to regional councils). They are:

Grade A—(for staff engaged on operations requiring small measure of responsibility, working to a limited number of well-defined rules, and whose tasks are mostly checked or closely supervised):

Age:	16	17	18	19	20
Wage:	£130	£145	£165	£180	£200
Age:	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**
Wage:	**£250**	**£265**	**£280**	**£295**	**£310 (max.)**

Grade B—(for staff doing mainly routine tasks but carrying responsibility greater than that of Grade A work; or checking of Grade A work): **£325—15 (3)—£390.**

Grade C—(for staff whose duties include independent arrangement of work calling for the exercise of some initiative needing little supervision and whose daily routine is varied): **£380—20—£440.**

Grade D—(for staff whose duties include more important clerical and minor administrative work with a measure of control over a sequence of jobs and over groups of staff; handling non-routine queries; and work requiring special knowledge or individual responsibility without supervision): **£430—20—£510.**

Grade E—(for staff whose duties involve the supervision of sections and responsibility for the efficient execution of a complete division of the work; regular contact with the management and administration; special knowledge of legal, accounting, statistical, engineering, industrial, etc., matters and a high level of experience, discretion and judgment): **£500—25—£600.**

Tribunal Backs Disputes Committee's Award

AFTER a negotiators' battle lasting eighteen months, NALGO brought an important claim to a successful conclusion before the National Arbitration Tribunal on April 27.

The decision, in the Association's favour, reinforces its contention that the findings of a provincial council's disputes committee are, in effect, if not legally, binding upon a local authority.

In 1946, when Teignmouth U.D.C. prepared a grading scheme based on the Charter, the two meter inspectors and collectors employed in its gas department were excluded. After unsuccessful representations to the local authority, appeals were lodged by the officers concerned, under Charter Paragraph 39, and arrangements made for the cases to be heard in October of that year. On being told of these arrangements, the authority asked for an opportunity to re-consider the claims. In October, 1946, it informed the provincial council that in its view the employees concerned were not regarded as officers for the purposes of the Charter, and that it therefore held that the disputes committee of the South-Western provincial council had no jurisdiction in the matter. This attitude caused the Association to declare a trade dispute under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order, and the Minister referred it to the National Joint Council to promote a settlement.

Eventually, the case was passed to the disputes committee of the provincial council, which met specially to consider it on May 1, 1947. That committee found in favour of the claim made and stated its view that the men concerned should be graded in accordance with the Miscellaneous Division Grade I of the Charter with effect from April 1, 1946. The local authority, which at that time was not a member of the provincial council, left the appeals committee under the impression that the award of the disputes committee was binding, since it followed a reference by the Minister under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order. The authority implemented the award somewhat unwillingly, but later discovered that it was not legally binding and declared a trade dispute with the Association. This was accepted by the Minister and had the effect of resurrecting the trade dispute declared by the Association twelve months before. The case was heard by the National Arbitration Tribunal in London on April 27, 1948. The Tribunal found in favour of the Association's claim.

Ministers Concede Compensation and Pension Claims

NALGO's representations on the draft National Health Service (Transfer of Officers and Compensation) Regulations, 1948, and the comparable regulations made under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, have been the subject of discussions with officials of the Ministries concerned.

At the Ministry of Health talks, which lasted over three hours, it was learned that NALGO had made representations on more points than any other organisation and that no other organisation had raised a point which was not covered by NALGO's representations.

Of the points raised—they were listed under 24 heads—many are still to be considered, but the Ministry has agreed the following four:

1. That the definition of "service" needed redrafting, as in its existing form it did not seem to include service with all types of local authorities, for instance, joint boards and committees.
2. That the provision that, in determining the amount of interim compensation, the compensating authority was to have regard to any payment to which the claimant became entitled, required redrafting to exclude repayment of superannuation contributions.
3. That the claimant should be entitled to require, not request, the compensating authority to review its decision.
4. That service in the Forces during the 1914-18 war of an officer who left the employment of an officer of a local authority so to serve should be reckonable for compensation.

The Ministry would not, however, concede the point that compensation should be payable for life and that the "accrued pension" provisions should be deleted.

At talks with the officials of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning on seven points not already discussed with the Ministry of Health, two (being drafting amendments) were not pressed, one was agreed, and the remainder were to be considered further. That agreed was on the definition of "existing officer" which, it was conceded, should be widened to include service with all types of local authorities.

National Health Service (Superannuation) Amending Regulations

The Minister of Health has issued draft regulations to amend the National Health Service (Superannuation) Regulations, 1947. Generally, the amending regulations remove minor difficulties which had appeared, but they contain additional provisions which cover points on which NALGO had made representations to the Ministry of Health:

1. Empowering local authorities to determine that non-contributing service of an officer who is to be transferred to a local health authority shall be reckonable as contributing service. (Previously this power was exercisable only in relation to transfers to Regional Hospital Boards, etc.)

2. Giving the officer who is transferred to a local health authority which maintains a pension fund under a local Act scheme the right to elect to remain subject to the pension scheme which applied to his former employment, instead of becoming subject to the local Act scheme of the new authority. This affects mainly officers of Metropolitan borough councils now contributing to a local Act scheme who, under the provision of the 1947 regulations, would have become subject on transfer to the L.C.C. local Act scheme at the rate of contribution applicable to new entrants.

Gas Bill

As reported in the May LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, NALGO asked the Ministry of Fuel and Power that gas-meter testing staffs employed in weights and measures departments of local authorities should be covered by the Bill's compensation provisions, and that the Minister should have due regard to their claims on making appointments under Clause 51.

Speaking on this point in the standing committee on May 6, A. ROBENS, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Fuel and Power, said, "... it is the intention of my right hon. Friend to take into his employment all persons who are employed full-time as inspectors of meters appointed under Section 4 of the Sale of Gas Act, 1859. He will also take over the assistants to those full-time inspectors who are themselves in full-time employment. Any meter inspector who does not fall into these categories may be taken over, but if he should not be taken over he will be protected, provided he is full-time in local authority service, by an amendment to Clause 57, which will provide for compensation either for loss of office or diminution of emoluments. Similarly, anyone who is taken over and suffers diminution of emoluments thereby will also be entitled to compensation ..."

Soon after the Parliamentary Secretary's statement, the following letter, addressed to NALGO's general secretary, was received from the honorary secretary of the Institute of Statutory Inspectors of Gas Meters:

"My executive council, I am sure, would desire me to express to you, and through you, to your legal officer, our very sincere sense of gratification at the outcome of our joint appeal to the Ministry of Fuel and Power regarding the position of members of this Institute under the proposed nationalisation of our service.

"The statement made by Mr. Robens in Committee on Thursday last, gives us the assurances we sought.

"Thank you very much indeed for your valued assistance in this matter—we are extremely appreciative of the support you have afforded us at a very crucial time."

NALGO wants:

Assistant District Officers

Applications are invited from men and women for posts of assistant district officers on Grade V of the Association's consolidated salary scales—£530 to £580—the commencing point depending on experience and qualifications. The appointments will be subject to one month's notice on either side; a superannuation scheme is in operation.

The successful candidates will be required to organise local government officers in the area to which they may be assigned, to attend meetings, and to represent the Association before local authorities and other bodies. Organising experience, energy, enthusiasm, and ability in public speaking are essential, and a knowledge of local government, its functions and procedure, is desirable. Reasonable travelling and subsistence allowances will be paid.

Applications, giving full particulars of age, education, qualifications, NALGO and other experience, and names of three persons to whom reference may be made, must reach the General Secretary, NALGO, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1 by June 30.

Canvassing members of the National Executive Council will disqualify.

Representation of the People Bill

Representatives of NALGO and of the Incorporated Association of Rating and Valuation Officers met the Home Secretary, J. CHUTER EDE, M.P., on April 16 to discuss the superannuation and compensation points reported in the May LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE. The deputation was introduced by T. W. BURDEN, M.P.

The Home Secretary agreed that an amendment to preserve superannuation rights was necessary. He asked, in regard to compensation, that a draft compensation clause should be submitted to him for consideration. A draft clause providing for compensation for acting returning officers and registration officers was submitted, and a letter has since been received, stating:

"The Secretary of State has considered this matter very carefully in the light of the arguments in your letter and of those put before him by the deputation which he received on April 16. He regrets, however, that he does not feel able to give his support to the proposal that compensation should be paid in the cases in question."

Electricity Council to Meet Every Two Months

AT its inaugural meeting on April 30, the National Joint Council for electricity administrative and clerical workers appointed a negotiating committee, decided to meet every two months, chose its officers, and transacted other important business.

The negotiating committee will consider urgent references from district joint councils that crop up between meetings of the national council, so long as they do not encroach upon national policy. The first task with which it has been charged by the national council, is to conduct discussions in preparation for the drafting of a national scheme of salaries and conditions. It was to meet for the first time on May 28—after "L G S" had gone to press—when seven of its twelve staff-side seats were to be occupied by NALGO representatives.

Not only will the council meet every two months—offering good hope of speedy decisions—but it will invite the Ministry of Labour to send a liaison officer to its meetings, of which the next will be held on July 20.

SIR HENRY SELF, vice-chairman of the B.E.A., is to occupy the chair, and two of NALGO's senior staff officers have been elected to other responsible posts on the Council: J. H. WARREN, the Association's general secretary is to be vice-chairman; and J. E. N. DAVIS, chief organisation officer and secretary of the staff side is to be one of the joint secretaries.

Each side is to subscribe £500 to meet the first year's expenses—printing, postage, and the hire of rooms. Travelling and personal expenses will be met by the organisations represented on the council.

Talks are now going on to settle the "line of demarcation" between staffs covered by the council and those to be covered by another negotiating body yet to be set up for managerial grades.

LORD CITRINE had had a word to say on this point the day before at a lunch given by the B.E.A. to representatives of the three existing councils—for manual workers, technical staffs, and administrative and clerical grades respectively.

The authority, he said, wanted to get on with discussions with the organisations concerned to define managerial grades and get the machinery for them into operation. There would be opportunity for full discussion through the industry's employees' national committee, which all recognised as appropriate for that purpose. He urged those present, having now set the national machinery in motion, to complete, without delay, the district, workshop, and office machinery.

HUGH GAITSKELL, Minister of Fuel and Power, also speaking at the luncheon, praised the speed with which the conciliation councils had been established, and hoped that it would also be possible soon to set up a council for welfare, education, and the efficient operation of the industry. On the success of that council would depend the spirit of the industry. He wanted to see everyone, right down to office and works level, feeling that he was part of the show and had a part to play not only in welfare but in industrial efficiency as well.

GEORGE ISAACS, Minister of Labour, added that he was especially glad that, in the electricity industry, the administrative and clerical worker had a place in the sun. This was right, for no organisation could function without him. The old idea that the State should follow the lead set by the best employers had, he thought, been replaced by a new one—that the State should give a lead. The machinery with which the industry was provided was such that those sitting on the various councils could, in fact, ensure that the State did give a lead. The Ministry of Labour was in the background to give help and guidance, but he believed that differences would be settled without having to call it in.

Health Officers Want Separate Branches But No Separate Division

PLANS for the future organisation of health service staffs were discussed at a conference of their representatives (nominated by district committees and the first of its kind to be held) at NALGO Headquarters on May 8.

It was agreed that:

1. The ultimate aim should be the creation of separate branches for the staffs of each hospital management committee, regional hospital board, and executive council;

2. Until this can be achieved, existing branches should recruit these officers, make provision for them, and give the benefit of their experience to those recruiting them, whether in municipal or voluntary hospitals; and

3. In view of the desirability of maintaining NALGO as a single entity, there should be no separate Division within the Association for health service officers.

Other points made in a lively debate on these proposals included:

Hospital staffs should be treated as a whole and not as "municipal" or "voluntary";

Social activity was valuable in bringing staffs together;

A special effort should be made to recruit nurses;

Contacts should be made with senior administrative staffs in existing voluntary hospitals; and

Lists of prospective transferees should be prepared as soon as possible, including both members and non-members of the Association.

Recruitment Drive Urged

From the chair, L. BEVAN, chairman of the N.E.C. service conditions and organisation committee and of the staff side of the National Joint Council for local government staffs, undertook to take the suggestions to the N.E.C., and emphasised that, in the meantime, every effort should be made to recruit members into either existing or new branches. Any new branch formed, whether covering a regional hospital board, hospital management committee, or individual hospital, would normally be registered.

Reports by district committee representatives suggested that progress in the organisation of district or regional consultative committees had been generally satisfactory. District committees which had taken no action were strongly urged to do so.

Reporting on the superannuation position, W. C. ANDERSON, NALGO's legal officer, said that the Ministry had invited interested organisations to submit their comments and observations on draft amending regulations to the National Health Service (Superannuation) Regulations, 1947.

The amendments were designed mainly to remove minor difficulties which had become apparent, but they also included two provisions sought by the Association—one applying para. 15 of the regulations to transfers to local health authorities, and the other covering, mainly, transfers from Metropolitan boroughs to the L.C.C.

Asked what action was being taken on this paragraph, which gave local authorities power to resolve that non-contributory service of an officer to be transferred should count as contributory service, Mr. Anderson said that a circular had been prepared calling the attention of branches to the regulation, recommending them to consider what action they would take on behalf of the officers concerned, and suggesting that, where difficulty arose, they should refer to the district officer.

A proposal that certain transferred officers should receive a pension calculated on not less than sixtieths was not supported. Officers already contributing to a superannuation scheme, it was pointed out, could exercise an option to remain in that scheme if they so desired.

After a discussion on the statement on the compensation code, prepared by the legal officer, and published last month in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, the chairman assured the conference that all steps would be taken to protect members affected by the proposals.

In reply to a call from the Yorkshire district health services sub-committee for an early statement by the Association of its proposals for standards of conditions and salaries in the new service and the protection of existing examination grants, it was explained that such matters could not be settled until the new Whitley machinery was functioning. This would not be until after July 5, but in the meantime, the Minister had authorised conditions roughly approximate to those of the local government Charter. Where action was called for, representations would be made to the Minister, either direct, or through the staff side of the appropriate functional council.

The sub-committee then asked that steps be taken to ensure that adequate notification of all vacancies on the staffs of regional hospital boards be made to local authority and hospital staffs. It was stated that action had already been taken to secure that end.

A proposal from the Metropolitan district committee to conduct a survey of health service members to be transferred found no favour with delegates who thought that effort should be concentrated on recruitment.

An undertaking was given that speakers' notes would be prepared to help in recruiting health staffs.

Where Was the Federation?

SIX organisations were invited by the governors of Guy's Hospital, London, to send a representative to address a meeting of its staff on May 12.

Five of these organisations—NALGO, N.U.G. & M.W., N.U.P.E., the Confederation of Health Service Employees, and the Association of Scientific Workers—sent representatives. The sixth—the Federation of Hospital Officers—did not.

This was not the first time that the Federation had failed to send a speaker to such a meeting, although it had, so far as is known, accepted the invitation to be represented.

Why, if it has nothing to hide and nothing to fear, should the Federation be so shy of openly stating its views and proposals before other unions?

The object of the meeting was to persuade members of the hospital staff to join an appropriate trade union, and no attempt was made to press the claims of any particular organisation. Arrangements were made for leaflets to be distributed later.

. . . ALL IN THE YEAR'S WORK . . .

Highlights from NALGO's Annual Report

Paper shortage has made it impossible to print more than 6,000 copies of NALGO's annual report for 1947—equivalent to only one copy for every 30 members. This is a pity, for the report's 200 pages are packed with information about the Association and its work. The paragraphs below will give some idea of its scope and may whet the appetite for more. Those who wish to read it in full should borrow a copy from their branch Secretary.

THE past year, the report discloses, has seen much change, frequent challenge, occasional check, but, on the whole, steady advance in NALGO's march to greater influence and service. In the short period covered it has, for example:

- Expanded its membership from 146,000 to 171,000 and become the biggest non-manual trade union in Britain and probably in the world;
- Led the way in the formation of joint negotiating machinery for the staffs of the electricity, gas, and health services;
- Secured 20 out of 33 seats on the electricity N.J.C.; seven out of 22 on the gas N.J.C.; 14 (negotiations are still in progress) on the "functional" councils for health staff groups; and a majority of seats on the staff sides of most of the gas and electricity district joint councils;
- Adapted its internal organisation by forming separate branches, consultative committees, and councils, and by appointing specialist organisers for the nationalised electricity, gas, and health services;
- Entered into friendly treaties with other trade unions to avoid possible clashes of interests;
- Won more pay for juniors, a higher maximum in the General Division, more for clerical grades, and equal pay for women in administrative grades in the local government service;
- Helped to obtain better scales for nurses, health visitors, medical laboratory technicians, masters and matrons of public assistance institutions, transport inspectors, registration officers and other groups of members;
- Reported to the Minister of Labour trade disputes with 24 authorities and companies, of which 14 gave way before arbitration, four accepted appeals committee rulings favourable to the Association, four were defeated at arbitration, one was deferred for investigation, and only one won its case.
- Strengthened its district staff by the appointment of six more assistant district officers;
- Received powerful endorsement for its public relations policy from the Consultative Committee on Local Government Publicity (representing the Minister of Health, the L.C.C., and the local authority associations) and the Minister of Health, who included in the Local Government Act, 1948, provisions to enable local authorities to incur expenditure on information services, lectures, displays, and so on;
- Helped to encourage a further 21 local authorities to appoint full-time public relations or information officers, and to establish the first Institute of Public Relations;
- Assisted in the presentation of 50 local government exhibitions, in the preparation of films, posters, film strips, and broadcasts on local government, supplied articles and letters to hundreds of newspapers, and prepared and distributed 1,500 sets of propaganda posters to branches;
- Examined 120 private bills and provisional orders and taken action where members' interests were threatened; advised and defended members in 1,000 legal cases; and made representations to Government departments and Ministers to grant adequate compensation and transfer rights to officers of services about to be nationalised;
- Remodelled its education policy; made grants to universities to encourage the study of public administration; made loans and awarded scholarship to help members take courses; and run summer schools, training courses, and a lending library;
- Helped to support 400 widows of members; assisted 150 members and their families; maintained 17 fatherless children; sent 100 beneficiaries on much-needed holidays; sent gifts to 1,000 at Christmas and birthdays; and paid for 300 to go to a convalescent home.
- Lent over £1,000,000 to help members buy homes and £13,000 for the purchase of cars, and insured 8,000 members against death, sickness, fire, theft, and other risks;
- Compiled a list of those killed and missing during the war for preservation at "Knole Lodge," the Association's war memorial home;
- Removed its Headquarters to imposing new offices at York Gate, Regent's Park, in the neighbourhood of the Government's "new Whitehall";
- Increased its annual income from £162,226 to £215,939, its General Fund assets from £221,561 to £265,427, its Reserve Fund from £66,022 to £146,136, its Benevolent Fund income from £33,772 to £37,636, and Building Society assets from £5,249,735 to £5,872,479.

First P.R. School Discusses NALGO's Job, Staff Training, Press Relations, Civics for Youth

IS NALGO's public relations policy doing its job? Can it do the job still better?

These questions were asked and answered by J. PHOENIX, Liverpool's information officer, when he lectured to 90 students at the first week-end school ever organised for NALGO and local government P.R.O.s.

The school was held at Southend on May 7-9 and had been organised by the enterprising Metropolitan district committee, under the leadership of A. E. KAY, Chelmsford, district P.R.O., and L. G. SIRETT, Hendon, chairman of the district P.R. sub-committee.

The ordinary member, declared Mr. Phoenix, paid his subscription to NALGO in the hope of getting a higher salary and increased status—not for public relations, education, or anything else. He hoped that public relations would help him to achieve those objects by informing councillors and citizens of his work and convincing them of its importance. But to-day, he was feeling frustrated because the employers were able continually to say "No" to his claims. He wanted public relations to do more about it.

"Prepare For the Next Step"

Hitherto, the main objective of the public relations policy had been to tell the citizen what local government did and arouse his interest in it. They must go on doing that until the Government and local authorities woke up to the need for them to do the job themselves, but they must, in the meantime, consider and prepare for the next step. They must sell the idea of a strong trade union whose members were worth good money.

A branch P.R.O.'s first task was to win at least 90 per cent. membership for his branch, his next to put over staff training—counter technique, telephone manners, and good letter-writing—and tell the world about it. When people knew that a trade union had begun a campaign for cheerful and efficient service they would appreciate it and soon come to expect it, and to those high expectations the staff would quickly respond. Branch P.R.O.s were the people for the job. None could equal them at it.

The plea for staff training was echoed by W. J. SEYMOUR, consultant in industrial and public relations and for 18 years P.R.O. to Vauxhall Motors, when he described public relations as neither science, art, profession, nor business, but simply an attitude of mind. If the employee's

"I'm sorry, but your sign contravenes the planning regulations!"

attitude to work—that is, if he was proud of his work and of those who employed him—was right, he could not help being a first-class P.R.O.

An organisation spending vast sums on Press and poster advertising was wasting its money if its employees were rude, churlish, and inefficient.

In this country, we had not the first idea of good reception. We should be more careful in wording notices. "Coats are left at the owners' risk," was ungracious and discourteous. Why not: "We are glad to provide this cloak-room, but regret that we cannot accept responsibility for any loss."

The P.R.O. should have the right to see and comment on any letter sent out by his organisation. Mr. Seymour's department had often been consulted on the drafting of a letter to a difficult customer. When an officer dictated a letter, he should remember that he would not be present to read it to the recipient—and he should not, therefore, dictate anything that needed the inflection of the human voice to give it the intended meaning. Neither should he sign anything that could be read with a sneer in the voice. A spelling mistake suggested to the recipient that the letter was flung at him without being read.

If insulted, the P.R.O. should always turn the other cheek; he should never put on anyone else the blame for any shortcoming; and he should never hide his light under a bushel.

More invaluable hints for P.R.O.s—both professional and voluntary—came from L. CRISP, editor of the "Middlesex Advertiser." He advised them to study the timetable of their local newspapers. It was almost useless to hold a Press conference on a Thursday, since that was the day on which most weeklies went to press. In any case, the reporter often kept quiet at Press conferences, for if he raised an interesting point his rivals got the answer and the "story" lost much of its value to him. He preferred to buttonhole a councillor to get an "exclusive."

Some P.R.O.s took pains to supply news in the form of carefully-phrased news-stories. That was unnecessary. All the editor wanted were the facts from which he could develop and present the story in his own way.

The P.R.O. should not fear criticism, but should try to educate his masters to be less sensitive to newspaper publicity.

Undemocratic Councils

A recent inquiry he had made for the Guild of Newspaper Editors on the attitude of local authorities to the Press had shown, Mr. Crisp said, that half the authorities covered made it virtually impossible for newspapers to comment on any topic before the council until after it had been considered and a resolution passed. Editors felt that there was little point in criticising a *fait accompli*. To prohibit prior comment was undemocratic. What would we think of Parliament if we had no chance of discussing a measure before it became law? Some councils sought to fetter the editor with stupid restrictions. One, for example, prefaced its committee minutes with this formidable warning:

"These minutes and reports are supplied to the Press on the distinct understanding that nothing contained, mentioned, or referred to therein shall be discussed, published, made public or available for public inspection, discussion, or criticism until after the council meeting has taken place, and then only after the proprietors, editors, members responsible for or accredited representatives of the publication have satisfied themselves that no amendment, alteration, additions, or deletions have been made thereto. Failure to comply with these conditions will, upon the first breach thereof, result in the withdrawal of facilities."

Other local authorities failed to minute resolutions in terms which did justice to the council's intention. "Resolved that £50 be spent on the Town Hall steps" was likely to raise public protest were it not explained that the steps were dangerous to visitors and that a new safety-rail was needed.

One town clerk starred items in the minutes to indicate that, in his opinion, they should be debated in committee and were not for newspapers to report. Mr. Crisp had successfully challenged this procedure as contrary to the statutory provision that a resolution of the council was necessary for a motion to be debated in camera.

He had known authorities which got through their meetings in a few minutes and prided themselves on their slickness. But the editor got little information or guidance from those meetings and the citizens remained ignorant of what the council was doing.

This last point was mentioned by Miss W. M. FROST, Youth Organiser, Lowestoft, speaking on "An Approach to Youth." It was no use taking young people to a council meeting unless it had been carefully prepared, she said. They would not understand that all the work had been done in committee beforehand and would think: "No wonder this town is badly run. The meeting was over in a few minutes and nobody said anything much." Yet it was essential to teach youth citizenship and a sense of social responsibility. At present few felt a loyalty to anything outside their own families—and some not even that.

But the urge to find a job and to be of use was

"Yes, they are working on the plans now!"

almost universal among adolescents, and that urge helped the youth organiser to interest them in citizenship.

Talking of the need to teach civics to schoolchildren, JAMES HEMMING, research officer, Association for Education in Citizenship, pointed out that, whereas 50 years ago the village child needed no instruction because it was familiar with the life of its neighbourhood and knew who mattered and what went on, to-day its world was too complex for it to grasp the essentials.

Civics should not be confined to a set period each week. It should be brought into all classwork, into the relationship between Head, teacher, and pupil, and into the study of English, history, geography, and mathematics. Children loved helping. They should be given a bigger part to play in public life than salvage and savings drives, important though they were. They should be consulted, through the schools, on such problems as juvenile delinquency, hooliganism, "milk-bottle smashing," and so on.

Local Interest Essential

Speaking on practical exhibition planning, JAMES HOLLAND, chief designer in the exhibitions division of the C.O.I., stressed that the P.R.O. could never get intimate local interest in an exhibition if it was planned "at the centre." Local material, models, and pictures, must be used. Money need not stand in the way—an exhibition could be built with brown paper, string, and enthusiam. The important thing was to have a planning team and to let it plan. The team should comprise a manager, a designer, and a script-writer. They should remember that what mattered was not what departmental people wanted to put into the exhibition, but what the visitor took out.

G. BROOKE-TAYLOR, P.R.O. to Hemel Hempstead Development Corporation, said that he hoped to visit each immigrant family before it came to the new town and try to ensure that it was welcomed and made to feel at home. The time was not yet ripe to spend much on publicity, because so far they had little to show but plans—and people were tired of plans. He was trying to build up a small group of well-informed people from which information would spread outwards.

READERS' FORUM

Is Promotion Bar Needed? Women's Claim to Equal Rights

ALTHOUGH there is strong criticism of the list of alternatives to the promotion examination, all seem prepared to accept without question the principle of the promotion bar. Yet, apart from the anomalies and unfairness created, especially for ex-Service men and women, this artificial and unnecessary barrier is another example of playing into the hands of the local authorities.

The Charter salary scales were established as a minimum (even if this was not specifically stated, it must follow, since officers would refuse to accept less), but in most cases they are also a maximum. And the man with extra ability, which previously might have been rewarded, is unlucky. In other words, incentive is lost (particularly in the General Division).

There are two ways of looking at the promotion bar: (1) A General Division officers who becomes qualified shall be promoted to a higher division if and when a suitable vacancy exists: and (2) a General Division officer shall *not* be promoted until he has qualified. Statement (1) is delightfully vague—"This year, next year, some time, never." Statement (2) is definite and watertight, with no let out—"Qualify or else!" in short.

And what is it all about? Qualifications, letters after a man's name, mean that he has spent a good deal of his own time and money in study for an examination which, in most cases, is purely theoretical, to test knowledge, 50 per cent of which he is unlikely ever to need in his working life. He may be able, efficient, courteous, and reliable, but if he has not been prepared to work x hours a week for y years (probably having to lock himself in his bedroom to concentrate, for, being under 30 and in the General Division, he has almost no hope of having his own home) he is condemned for the rest of his career to a salary out of keeping with his work and experience.

NALGO doesn't seem to mind about this; it ignores the fact that length of service and ability even exist. It says "qualify" and assumes that ability and qualification are synonymous. This I deny. The two are complementary, but neither the same thing nor interdependent.

Throughout the whole local government service there seems to be this fallacious fetish of putting degrees, diplomas, certificates and qualifications before everything else, and I believe that it is time something was done by NALGO to counteract it. I have never before heard of a trade union suggesting a bar to the promotion of its own members.

"COSMOS."

Woking.

NALGO did not suggest the promotion bar. The employers made it a condition for the grant of better salary scales of national application.

EQUAL PAY AGAIN

"When Will Women Get it"?

HAVING heard no protest at the bland continuation by the arbitration tribunal of a differentiated rate for most women in the service, I had almost concluded that those who believe in equal pay—or, as I prefer it, the rate for the job—had given up the fight until I saw six notices of motion on it in the conference agenda.

This is not a new wages claim, but simply a demand that the type of work and the responsibility attaching to it should be the deciding factors in grading posts under the Charter, and that two people holding similar posts, similarly graded, should receive the same salary, irrespective of sex.

Does NALGO merely pay lip service to this principle? So far as I know, it meekly accepted lower rates for women.

Some eight million women are employed in this country at cut prices—degrading for them and unsafe for men. Such a source of cheap labour undermines the standards for which they have fought for a century. Local government and the civil service must blaze the trail! Industry will follow.

Equal pay exists among Cabinet Ministers, members of Parliament, doctors, artists, lawyers, journalists and the like, proving that men, in these professions, are alive to their own interests. Of course, all reforms cost the nation something, and it was stated at the Royal Commission, that equal pay in the civil, local government, teaching and nursing and auxiliary services, would cost between thirty and forty millions. This is less than the cost of three days of war.

Women cannot live more cheaply than men. Do they enjoy cheaper rents, rates, clothing, food, transport, fuel, taxation, education, or entertainment? Eliza Doolittle's reply fits the bill.

Leeds. DOROTHY HUMPHREYS.

"Back-seat Days Are Over"

THE average woman is a trusting soul, and has not yet realised that her particular problems are foreign to the men representing her. The only way she can ensure that her problems are solved satisfactorily is by serving on committees herself and stating her own case. My advice to women is: keep up to date; read about what is going on; when there has been an area committee meeting, make it your business to find out all about it. The days of women taking a back seat are over.

22, Medway Close, M. G. GOSSE.
Barnet.

Since next month's journal (to be published about July 23) will be devoted entirely to reports of Conference, there will be no space for letters save on matters of importance and urgency. "Readers' Forum" will reappear in the September journal, letters for which must reach the Editor at 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1. by August 16.

THE MARRIAGE BAR

"An Unjust Imposition"

THE amendments to the notice of motion on the Conference's agenda calling for the removal of the marriage bar show a fundamental misunderstanding of the whole question of women in "gainful employment." They suggest that the marriage bar should be maintained, except in cases of "hardship"—at any rate until more normal conditions prevail. But what are more normal conditions? Have conditions ever been normal? Women do not cause unemployment. They do not periodically flood the labour market and then withdraw. Unemployment is rooted in economics. Why make women the scapegoat? To prevent married women working for pay is as unjust, as artificial, and as blatant a piece of sex domination as were the burning of widows and the enforced wearing by women of veils and yashmaks.

All men and women should be free to develop and express to the maximum the talents they possess. To educate women to a high standard academically and professionally or technically, and then to dismiss them on marriage, is gross waste of trained labour power. To women for whom child care is a vocation there is no finer career (but married women bringing up families should not be, as now, financially dependent and frequently grossly overworked). But those women who enjoy the wider life of corporate effort, and who are competent and valuable in their occupations, should not be denied marriage and parenthood if they wish to continue in their jobs.

As to the effect on the birthrate, it is arguable that if women continue to work after marriage, they will be able to marry and have children sooner, because they will be better able to afford parenthood.

Let NALGO be true to its object of advancing the cause of its members—regardless of their sex. The marriage bar is an unjust imposition on women. It must be removed throughout the local government service.

Blackpool. ERICA K. HODSON.

METROPOLITAN STRIKE CALL

"Reactionary" Arguments?

WAS it necessary for John C. Sutcliffe to descend to the gutter with his sneer that all speakers from the floor at the recent Metropolitan district demonstration "came from the East"? Does he not know that the wise men came from the East, whence also comes the light? He evidently forgets that we are all members of the same trade union.

Several of his statements recall the arguments of reactionary employers in the past. His view, for example, that black-coated workers are relatively unimportant, was responsible for their damnable conditions in the past. They were far too "respectable," and their hands far too "clean." The manual workers had no such conceit and, by facing realities instead of humbugging themselves, fought for and obtained better conditions. But possibly Mr. Sutcliffe prefers that black-coated workers should remain "respectable" and enjoy the three Ps—pride, poverty and a piano, plus an aspidistra in the window.

If NALGO decided to affiliate to the T.U.C., and if it became necessary to take strike action, the manual workers would be far more likely to respect us for having the guts to fight, and I am not so certain that they would not strike in sympathy.

When Mr. Sutcliffe prates about "the satisfaction of implementing more noble requirements, etc.," I would remind him that ethics and civilisation also demand that black-coated workers shall be treated as sentient beings. Let us free ourselves from all this hypocritical humbug. We are black-coated *workers*, and should think and speak as such and not ape the reactionary employers.

Bethnal Green Branch. E. E. SWINFORD.

"CHARTER CUT SALARIES"

A Rural District Claim

IN the footnote to the letter from E. E. Hart, in the April journal, you say that you do not know of a single instance in which the effect of the Charter has been to lower salary standards.

Before the Charter was adopted, my council had applied the principle of equal pay for women; therefore, all women entering the service of this council since the Charter are worse off than they would have been under the old scales. The following comparisons illustrate the point.

	Charter.	*Old Scale.*
Age 20	£160 p.a.	£178 p.a.
" 21	£178 "	£203 "
" 28	£270 "	£308 "

The application of the Charter to the men showed very small improvements in one or two cases, but, on the whole, would have resulted in a definite worsening of the salary scales but for the fair interpretation of the new scales by the council, and for the saving clause that no officer should have his position worsened.

The men in my own department regard the Charter with disfavour, if only because the avenues for rapid promotion under the old scales have been effectively blocked by the provisions for promotion from the General Division. It was formerly possible to proceed as far as £560 p.a. without entering any of the professional or technical grades.

In addition, all members of the staff over 21, apart from chief officers, lost three days' holiday a year when the Charter was introduced.

Dorchester R.D.C. C. A. BAKER.

This is the first and, so far, the only example produced, and suggests that the staff of Dorchester R.D.C. were exceptionally fortunate in their council. Pre-charter salaries for women (including bonus) recommended by the South-Western provincial council were £153 12s. at 20, £168 12s. at 21, and £218 12s. (General Division Maximum) at 25. It would be interesting to know the size of the staff.

LONDONERS' PLIGHT

Held Back by Provinces?

I VIEW with growing anxiety the means by which the employers' side of the N.J.C. defeats every motion for better conditions put forward by our representatives. Most of the objections and arguments appear to be built on the low salaries and poor conditions prevailing in small authorities before the war. By joint action the Metropolitan authorities have given considerable aid to these lesser branches; but is it necessary for us to continue to stay at their side, now that their conditions have been improved and they are becoming a millstone around our necks?

Even the NALGO education committee is formulating plans for the promotion examination from the General Division, which is really applicable only to these smaller authorities and not to ours. One would hardly need to hold the equivalent of the I.M.T.A. Final to move from G.D. here.

As I write, the result of our claim for better London "weighting" is not known, but I feel certain that the award will be reduced because of applications from towns, like Birmingham and Liverpool, who desire to use our plight as a lever for their own benefit. Should not we, now that we have done well for the rest of NALGO, seek our own benefit under the London Whitley Council and not allow the National Council to dominate our affairs?

St. Pancras. K. H. NEVILLE.

While leaving others to reply to the general argument, we must point out that the NALGO education committee has no part in formulating regulations for the promotion examination. That is the responsibility of the independent Local Government Examinations Board.

CHARTER ANOMALIES
"Complete Revision Needed"

AMENDMENTS to the Charter have caused so many anomalies that a complete revision of the salaries and annual leave sections appears to be needed to remove them.

To mention one point only, the original intention of the Charter was to base holidays on salary. Now they are based on grade—with the result that the officer in Miscellaneous 1 is allowed 18 working days, whereas the officer at the top of the General Division gets only 15 working days, although his consolidated salary is higher than that of the Miscellaneous 1 officer. Why this disparity and the apparent decision that while a Miscellaneous 1 officer is no longer eligible for the same maximum salary as the General Division, he should get more in holidays?

Further, can a reasonable explanation be given for the salary of the Clerical Division being higher than that of A.P.T. 1?

This is *not* good enough. I am, in the main, in favour of the original Charter, but surely we are, in places, sliding backwards.

St. Marylebone Branch. D. MAINS.

Only the National Arbitration Tribunal, which created these anomalies, could answer the questions—and it would not. But the staff side of the National Joint Council is fully aware of them and is seeking their correction.

Should Service Count, Too?

THERE is rising concern at the unfair position brought about by the appointment to General Division posts of people with no previous local government, and, in some cases, very little office experience, who, because they are over 32, are receiving almost £2 a week more than existing officers with ten years' local government service to their credit. A solution would be to amend the present scale to one of "age and service." For example, were two years of local government service to count as one year of age, an officer with 11 years' experience would reach the maximum at 27 instead of at 32, as at present.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

WAGE COMPARISONS
38-Hour Week a Fallacy

IN commenting on Coventry's resolution proposing six-monthly revision of Charter scales in the light of the average wage levels of all workers, you suggest that comparison with average wage levels would be fallacious and dangerous, in view of the differences in working hours. I suggest that our 38-hour week is a fallacy, since most officers must spend hours of their spare time every week reading professional and technical journals, government directives, and minutes.

Adoption of the Coventry proposal would obviate the intolerable delaying tactics of the employers' side of the N.J.C., retain our hard-won status, and enable preparation of rate estimates at appropriate times; and NALGO could not be accused of leading action towards inflation. Support of the T.U.C. is inherent in the proposal and this was recognised in my branch's almost unanimous vote in favour of affiliation.

Coventry Branch H. DAY.

WHAT SHOULD GRADINGS BE?
National Survey Urged

FEW local government officers will really disagree with the alternative policy for increasing individual salaries advocated by "Critic" in the March journal. Many of us would have preferred his policy from the outset.

May I suggest that information be obtained from all branches about gradings in each area, and that this information be analysed and a statement published indicating a fair grading for each appointment in the service. Members would then know whether their own particular grading was fair and, if not, what it should be.

I appreciate that this would be an immense task, and that information about every post could not be expected at once. But possibly 30 or 40 could be mentioned every month in "L.G.S."

466, Hatfield Road, B. C. A. TURNER.
St. Alban's.

Headquarters is already making a national inquiry which will show the percentage of officers in each grade in most local authorities. To inquire into the grading of each post would not only be an immense task, but would have little value, since the responsibilities of similar appointments vary greatly between one authority and another.

LITTLE CASH, BUT—
Service Has Other Advantages

THE subject of almost every letter on this page is money, money, money! Let us forget it for a while and check up on how good our job is in other respects. How about the following?

1. Have you a pleasant view from your office window, or do you face a brick wall?
2. Is the office comfortable and warm, or cramped and draughty?
3. Have you any attractive young ladies in your department, or are you all-male?
4. Has your chief clerk a sense of humour, or is he an old so-and-so?
5. Does your sectional chief give you a job and let you get on with it, or is he a fusser?
6. Does the boss take an interest in you and your job, or regard you as a piece of office equipment?
7. Do you respect the integrity of the members of your council, or do you see them "fiddling" their relatives into jobs and otherwise inviting disrespect?

If you can say yes to the first part of each question, you should be happy in your work, irrespective of the salary.

"NON-BEEFER."

A SATISFIED MEMBER
"Faith in NALGO Renewed"

AS an ordinary (and perhaps apathetic) member, I would like to express my gratification with the efforts of the Association on my behalf, which have resulted in an award in my favour of retrospective payment from a previous employing authority.

The branch—Bootle—took on a difficult task, and my expectations were nil. The result, therefore, was both unexpected and pleasing, and has renewed my faith in NALGO.

VICTOR STANIFORTH.
93, Endborne Road,
Orrell Park, Liverpool.

REGISTRARS' HOPES
Still Being Deferred

ALTHOUGH the new scale of salaries for the registrars was approved by the National Joint Council, the Minister, and the associations of local authorities last January (after two years of negotiation), now, after a further lapse of four months, little, if any, progress has been made to give effect to it. Surely the time has arrived for NALGO to see that there is no further delay in giving these officers their long-awaited dues.

"REGISTRAR"

The need for local authorities to obtain the sanction of the Registrar General for amended schemes is causing delay in some cases, but, in general, it is incorrect to say that little progress is being made.

LONGER HOLIDAYS
"Sheer Lunacy" To-day

FOR the next few years the nation will be living on tick and on the dole. Half the difference between what we earn and what we spend will be given to us by America. Presumably the other half will swell our debit balance all over the world and increase the prospect of final bankruptcy.

In these conditions, it is sheer lunacy for local government officials to press on NALGO proposal for holidays on the scale indicated by recent amendments to the Conference agenda.

It is essential that we should all be content with twelve days' holiday and fewer staff, and should not contribute to the rapidly growing opinion that local government is a mere incubus, and that so little work is done that extravagant holidays will make no difference.

46, Station Road, M. BORG.
King's Norton.

ELECTRICITY STAFFS
Why No Votes for Youth?

THE negotiating machinery established for electricity staffs is marred by the provision that members under 21 may not participate in the election of the local staff committees—although non-union members may do so. The Association does not debar junior members from participating in the N.E.C. elections: why, therefore, did it agree to this undemocratic clause?

Our aim should be to encourage young people to take a greater interest in trade union activity and to seek means of sustaining this interest. This clause can only produce the opposite effect, and now that the staff side representatives have been chosen for the N.J.C., they should make immediate representations so that this anomaly will be removed by September, when the staff committees will be in existence.

21, St. Briavels Grove. C. R. GIBSON.
Bristol, 6.

This provision is common to all electricity local staff committees and was accepted by the unions concerned. NALGO questioned it, but was told that it was the usual trade union practice.

BUILDING SOCIETY ADVANCES
Are They Too High?

SOME people are suggesting that the inflated prices now being paid for house property are a result of the readiness of lending organisations to grant advances. Building societies have hitherto been known for their prudent financial policy, and this in truth has led to their being regarded as attractive for investment. If, however, they take an *undue* risk, this can only be at the risk of the investors.

It would be helpful to members and of advantage to the society if the policy of the NALGO Building Society in this respect were explained.

H. P.

In approving applications for advances based on current prices, the Committee of Management of the NALGO Building Society seeks to follow a policy which is both cautious from the point of view of investing members and not ungenerous from the point of view of the applicant. The policy is under constant review in conjunction with surveyors' reports from all over the country, and trends are most carefully watched. As a general rule, it is considered sound to-day to grant advances of up to twice the pre-war value, subject to the advance not exceeding 80 per cent. of the purchase price or current market valuation, whichever is the lower. These are maximum terms, and most borrowers are requiring loans which show a much greater margin of security.

SUPERANNUATION PLEA
"Let Women Retire at 55"

SURELY the retiring age for local government officers should now be brought into line with that under the National Health Service Regulations and of civil servants, teachers, and others, who retire at 60? If women were given the option of retiring at 55 or 56, it would be an advantage to both employers and employees.

"ANOMALY."

VACANT APPOINTMENTS
A Suggestion to Councils

COULD NALGO suggest to all local authorities, through their associations, that when advertising appointments vacant they should:

1. Dispense with testimonials and require only the names of referees;
2. State whether houses are available, or they would help to find accommodation; and
3. Consider the payment of billeting allowances to officers forced to live apart from their families?

Surrey. "APPLICANT."

The first suggestion has already been put to the National Joint Council, but the employers would not agree.

WEEKEND REPORT

BY "RUFUS"

I'VE always thought this page needed brightening up, so I've taken it over myself this month.

I cannot pretend that Tobias—my displaced colleague—is convinced, at last, of my superior capabilities. I just happened to sock him on the jaw and, in response, he punched my head. This had no effect on me, but severely dislocated his right hand—not, as he says, because I am bone from the neck up and present an unnatural resistance to attack.

Thus it came about that the old bore was unable to pen his usual tripe, and you are to have the benefit of my report on our recent NALGO district school. I am sorry to say that when I presented this report to our branch, I was the subject of an uncalled-for personal attack, led by young Sackbutt who, since his discharge from the army, seems to think that NALGO exists to facilitate talking back to one's superiors. Whereas, of course, it also runs a building society.

The theme was that it would have been better to send younger people to the week-end school, instead of a pompous ass who, if he didn't know something about NALGO and trade unions by this time, would never learn now.

Frankly, my sole idea in going to the school was to improve relations between local government officers by getting together with a few kindred spirits from other branches who could no doubt think of better ways of spending a week-end than listening to lectures by people who probably knew less than we did.

At the hotel where the school was to be held I found myself next door to a likely-looking chap, to whom I proceeded to explain my scheme.

"Everybody," I said, "knows about trade unionism. All you have to do is write a report for the branch: 'There were the Tolpuddle Martyrs, followed by the General Strike, and the National Charter not far behind.' Then you can go out and enjoy life—it's not such a bad old town for a week-end away from home."

"That's a great idea," he said wistfully, "and I only wish I could join you."

Tied to the apron-strings of his branch E.C., I decided scornfully, then I went along to the first lecture, for the sake of putting in an appearance at roll-call, but who should the lecturer be but the chap in the room next to mine.

I had to stay for a bit to convince him that I had only been joking. And, darn me, if I didn't get interested.

It seemed there had been quite a lot of trade unionism before the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The fellow said the first strike on record was by the Israelites in Egypt when they rebelled against having to fetch the straw for their brickmaking, as well as producing the same number of bricks as they had done before the straw order came out.

Anti-Combination laws, I found, were not a plot against comedians' underwear, but a repression of any kind of organisation of that labour which was, so to speak, the braces holding up the pants of industrial expansion. True, a pair of braces will sometimes refuse to hold up its pants, or the pants will say, "To the devil with braces!" and try to do without them. But it's really much better for both to get together on local joint committees and joint industrial councils, which can go to arbitration and win four-shilling cost-of-living bonuses.

In the year 1905, the lecturer said, NALGO came into the picture to hold up the striped trousers (shiny) of local government administration. By long and untiring effort we have now got Charter grades, which enable us to buy an occasional bottle of ammonia to remove the shine. In the meantime, however, these have been transformed into stained flannel bags, or demob suits. Or skirts which will keep the old look until it's fashionable again.

After the lectures we had discussion. A fellow got up to speak against local joint committees. "In my branch," he said, "we are not prepared to match our wits against the half-wits who employ us."

With the idea of making a valuable contribution to the discussion, I began to explain the many achievements of my own branch, most of which, I indicated, were due to my personal drive and initiative. The chairman ruled me out of order. He then gave an account of the many achievements of the district committee, most of which, he indicated, were due to his personal drive and initiative. The school concluded with mutual back-scratching, votes of thanks, etc.

Then the social part of the week-end began. I at once attached myself to the man who had made the speech about the half-wits who were his employers. By the simple device of pretending to be a press representative, I got him to pay for enough drinks to keep me happy. Some time later we were joined by the lecturer, who obliged with a monologue beginning,

It was Christmas Day in the workhouse,
Of which the inmates all
Were General Division officers,
Whose salaries were too small . . .

By the way, the reason I socked Tobias on the jaw was because he had the bad taste to remind me that I used to be against affiliation to the T.U.C. on the grounds that we must retain our dignity and independence.

As a result of my week-end's education I am of opinion that there is a lot more dignity in being at one with the Israelites who were deported to the colonies. Not to speak of the Tolpuddle Martyrs who refused to make bricks without straw.

at random—by "hyperion"

Brevities.

Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it.—*R. W. Emerson.*

That is the whole essence of decadence, the effacement of five people who do a thing for fun by one person who does it for money.—*G. K. Chesterton.*

Two Clerihews.

Mr. Edward Gibbon
Tied up his pants with ribbon,
There were six volumes, in all
Between the "Decline and Fall."

General de Gaulle
Is really a friendly soul,
His air of a supercilious horse,
Is assumed, of course.

Expensive Accent.

American and British coal stocks in Eire are being mixed and the resulting mixture is being sold at £6 17s. a ton.

A Dublin coalman, replying to an inquiry as to what kind of coal he was offering, said: "It's Welsh coal, but it burns with an American accent—and you're paying for the accent."

Sanitary Inspector's Postbag.

"I would be glad if you would kindly call at the earliest possible opportunity to inspect some of my faults."

"Please let me have some free rat poison as my

husband will be home on Saturday."—*Leyton "News and Views."*

Wrong Number!

When I dialled RIVerside
And LIVingstone replied
I said in mock despair: "Is Stanley there?"
Thinking to be witty.
It was a pity:
Because
He was.—*Punch.*

Without Comment.

Worth Parish Council went into committee last night to discuss the implications of an alleged decision to refuse consideration of a Copthorne man's application for a Council house because of his age and "doubtful procreative potential."—*Sussex Daily News.*

Portrait of Someone You Know.

She'll have the last word, or bust—
And what makes it mean,
She also wants the first—
And all those in between!—*E. M. W.*

Fashion Notes.

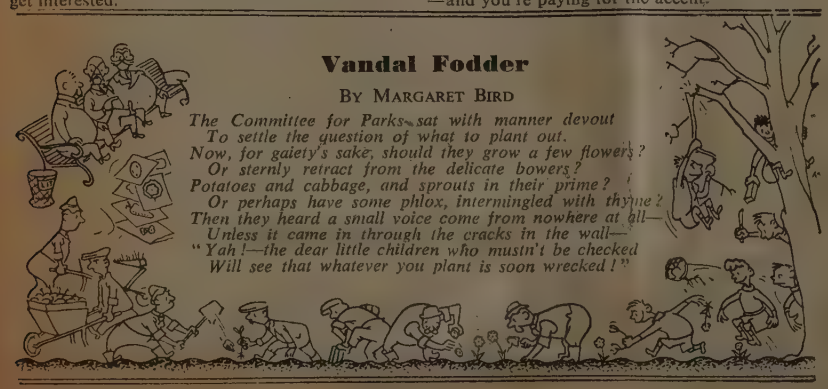
". . . and then, to end everything, my wife came home wearing her New Look, and I didn't notice any difference!"

Women's slacks rarely are.—*Collier's Magazine.*

Vandal Fodder

By Margaret Bird

The Committee for Parks sat with manner devout
To settle the question of what to plant out.
Now, for gaiety's sake, should they grow a few flowers?
Or sternly retract from the delicate bowers?
Potatoes and cabbage, and sprouts in their prime?
Or perhaps have some phlox, intermingled with thyme?
Then they heard a small voice come from nowhere at all—
Unless it came in through the cracks in the wall—
"Yah!—the dear little children who mustn't be checked
Will see that whatever you plant is soon wrecked!"



MY BOOKSHELF EDWARD KAY

Restoring the Black Country : The Voluntary Services : An ABC of Government.

AMONG modern planners, the West Midland Group holds high place for its vision, practical judgment, and skill in presenting its proposals.

Two years ago, in *English County*, it gave us a classic survey of Herefordshire life, and now, in *Conurbation* (Architectural Press, 30s.), it examines Birmingham and the Black Country.

The group consists of sociologists, architects, industrialists, and other experts grouped around Birmingham university and the Cadbury organisation at Bournville. *Conurbation* is one of the finest and most imaginative planning surveys and will long be the bible of those responsible for the social development of this cradle of English industrialism. As a piece of book production alone it merits high praise, though the printer is undeservedly omitted from the list of "credits."

In the area it surveys, more than one-third of the people live in slum houses, and one-eighth of the land is derelict—through lack of planning in the past. If factories, houses, and other buildings were wisely redistributed, there would be plenty of land for all uses, including agriculture and more much-needed open space; the indiscriminate sprawl of buildings is not only an æsthetic offence, but a waste of resources. The ravages of nineteenth-century industrialism cannot be repaired in a moment, and its extravagant inefficiency may long aggravate our economic difficulties. But this book will be a valuable guide in the slow task of reconstructing the towns and countryside which we and our forbears have so recklessly misused.

Thirty Years of the Social Services

THE old rivalry between statutory and voluntary social services is dormant now if not at an end. The armistice rests on the belief that they are complementary and can thus exist side by side to the general advantage. Some of the less desirable features which they shared—like the over-regimentation associated with the former Charity Organisation Society or some poor law guardians—have become less common, perhaps, in part, because of the healthy competition between them. That capable sociologist, HENRY MESS, started to write a survey of the voluntary services, but died before he had completed more than a few chapters. Now, under the title of *Voluntary Services Since* 1918 (Kegan, Paul, 21s.) it has appeared with its gaps filled by other hands, and confirms the view that, if public services are sometimes soulless, many of the voluntaries are snobbish and patronising and waste a lot of energy in cadging funds; and that, in spite of the "concentration" of recent years, there is still too much overlapping. The chapters by Mr. Mess make one wish he could have completed the survey himself.

Coventry

COVENTRY'S former city archivist, LEVI FOX; has written an enthusiastic "introduction to the history of the city," *Coventry's Heritage* (Coventry Evening Telegraph, 6s.). Readable, and generously illustrated, it will help her citizens and friends to understand the rich human interest of her social and economic growth.

A Lively Text-Book

IN a modern industrial state "the ordinary citizen is in danger of thinking himself as so small a cog in an enormous machine that he loses his sense of actively belonging to it." To counter this danger, JOHN HAWGOOD has written *The Citizen and Government* (Nicholson & Watson, 6s.). Clear and simple, whether in photograph, isotype diagram, or printed word, this book is first-rate public relations for government; a vivid text-book for senior scholars, it will equally attract grown-up readers. Mr. Hawgood's definition of government is commendably broad, too: it covers not only the ordinary institutions, central and local, English and American, but also some of the major pressure groups which exercise, sometimes behind the scenes, so large an influence on our lives. The Mining Association, he points out, killed Coal Bill after Coal Bill regardless of the political colour of the government, and the B.M.A.'s recasting of the national health service is still going on. Trades unions, voluntary propagandist societies, social surveys, all come within Mr. Hawgood's scope.

A Slice of Social Life

I HAVE previously commended MAURICE THOMAS as an able populariser of social history and institutions; now he has done a praiseworthy piece of original work, published as *The Early Factory Legislation* (in an unattractive format and printing style) by the Thames Bank Publishing Company, Leigh-on-Sea, at the stiffish price of 35s. Despite its material drawbacks, the book is a valuable addition to social history, for Mr. Thomas has opened a new vein—the official Home Office minutes of meetings of factory inspectors and their reports. The general background is familiar—the horrific working conditions which ensued from the get-rich-quick methods of the early industrialists, the ravages of ill-health which followed, and the opposition of the employing class in Parliament and elsewhere to any statutory restriction of its freedom to exploit the workers. Mr. Thomas retells the story effectively and with a mass of evidence drawn from sources hitherto unused by historians. The result is a vivid, thoroughly-documented, account of a pregnant period in English history.

Planning Law Up-to-Date

FEW branches of the law have been so much revised as town and country planning: Dr. Ivor Jennings' classic has become so out of date that J. R. HOWARD ROBERTS, author of its second edition, has prepared a new volume, *The Law of Town and Country Planning* (Charles Knight, 57s. 6d.), embodying the Act of 1947—and so brought the tangled story up to date. The Act consolidated what was still current and introduced revolutionary changes, so that Mr. Howard Roberts' book stands as the most comprehensive on the subject. It is for serious students and practitioners who will not miss those graces of presentation which would be needed were the general reader's attention to be won and held. It includes all the main legislation on planning, with the statutory orders and regulations, but the latest Developments Order and subsequent instruments will have to be embodied in a supplement. The Acts are printed *in extenso* and accompanied by explanatory notes.

Rather less comprehensive on the same topic is *The Town and Country Planning Act*, 1947, by H. A. HILL and D. P. KERRIGAN (Butterworth, 25s.). For the lay reader, this has the merit of a twenty-page general introduction surveying the subject in non-legal language.

For Auditors and Accountants

ARTHUR COLLINS' *Municipal Internal Audits*, first published in 1904, has reached its eighth edition (Gee & Co., 27s. 6d.), the last having appeared in 1943. Recent legislative changes will put it out of date in some important details, but its principles will remain valid and will long continue to serve students and practising accountants.

Manchester's "Whitaker"

THE 1948 edition of that admirable "Whitaker's Almanack" of Manchester, the *Official Handbook*, has been issued from the Municipal Information Bureau at 12s. (cloth) and 8s. 6d. (paper). It seems to comprise all the information about the corporation and other aspects of the city's public life that could possibly be needed by the most inquisitive citizen.

Hampstead—A Disappointment

A BOOK about London's loveliest borough raises expectations, but they will be disappointed by J. H. PRESTON'S *The Story of Hampstead* (Staples, 8s. 6d). It is, in effect, no more than an ill-arranged catalogue failing to convey that combination of town and country graces which is Hampstead's peculiarity and charm. The author is vague about grammar and dates, often includes much that is trivial, and gives some very ordinary photographs.

Registration Officers Review New Pay Scales

REPORTING, at the annual general meeting of the National Association of Registration Officers, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on April 24, on the negotiations through the National Joint Council to place registration officers under the local government Charter grading scheme, C. L. HURST, general secretary, said that the Registrar-General's department had wished to see the registration officers with some years of service placed at the top of the grade. But the County Councils Association had objected, and the best the Registrar-General could do was to tell local authorities that it was within their discretion to place registration officers with qualifying service at any stage in the grade. His information was that most authorities were interpreting this with reasonable regard to the long delays suffered by the officers. The National Joint Council had provided for grading to be made retrospective to April 1, 1947, and, so far, all but two had done that.

Many registrars had described the new salary scale (£450 to £525 consolidated) as "disgusting," "disgraceful" and "scandalous," but Mr. Hurst did not agree that it was as bad as that. They should remember that the grading would carry any improvements obtained for local government officers generally and that London officers had, for the first time, achieved London "weighting," inadequate though it was. Furthermore, if "weighting" were adopted in the provinces, it would be applied to registration officers.

J. M. ROSS, assistant secretary, General Register Office, said that extra staff had been allocated to speed up the amendment of registration schemes, and within a few weeks every district would have received its amended scheme. The number of inspectors of registration had been increased, and the basis for assessing the work of registration officers and in determining whether they would receive whole-time or part-time salaries, had been revised to take account of the additional duties imposed on them. The basis of assessment was more generous than hitherto.

Other speakers stressed the importance of the work of the registration officer—upon which all government departments relied—and complained that, in some cases, reassessments had left them worse off and had led to anomalies and hardships; that local authorities robbed them of promotion by switching redundant employees into the registration service; and that their lack of status as direct employees excluded them from arbitration and many legal safeguards.

Replying to the discussion, Mr. Ross said that there must be some part-time officers, especially in country districts. The Registrar-General's department wanted to deal with the status of registration officers, but he could make no promise that it would be done soon. In answer to a question, Mr. Ross said that the Registrar-General could not disclose the formulæ used in making assessments.

Resolutions adopted by the meeting included:

That all registration officers, salaried, fee-paid, whole-time, or part-time, should be treated alike for purpose of contributions under the National Insurance Act;

That the Association's membership be grouped into areas and each area be accorded representation on the executive committee by ballot of area branches;

That a joint advisory committee be set up of representatives of the Association and the General Register Office.

Mr. A. W. Brewer, superintendent registrar, Hackney, was elected president for the ensuing year.

A NALGO DIARY By "ABINGDON"

Liverpool on the Air : Welcome to Newport : Bulletin for P R O s

HOW little we know about Britain! We possess in this country not only the biggest city in the world, but some of its oldest and loveliest (as well as some of its dirtiest and ugliest) towns and villages, packed with the raw meat of history and romance. Yet the average Briton to-day knows more of Hollywood Boulevard than he does of Scotland Road, and if you asked him to find Broadway would look for it in New York, not Worcestershire.

These reflections were prompted by the broadcast, on May 13, of "Liverpool—Portrait of a City," a script written by JIM PHŒNIX, Liverpool's information officer (and the outstanding wit of many NALGO Conferences), in conjunction with Norman Swallow, of the B.B.C. It was a brilliant success, creating, through the loudspeaker, the living atmosphere of the city; though for me the spell was broken occasionally by bad reception, due to the fact that it was broadcast only in the North Regional programme. Cannot the B.B.C. give us more of this kind of thing—and when it does so, put it out on the national wavelength so that we can all hear it? But perhaps it would if there were more Phœnixes about to bring their towns to life on the air.

Welcoming the Newcomer

ANOTHER good example of public relations, internal rather than external, of which I have heard this month comes from **Newport,** Monmouthshire. There, the branch president sends a friendly letter of welcome to every new entrant to the service. To the junior he seeks "to break down that inevitable 'new boy' or 'new girl' feeling which we all experience when we enter a new phase of our career," and adds:

"At the commencement you may merely look upon your appointment as a job of work, but I confidently anticipate that before you have been in the service very long you will come to the realisation that you are doing something really worth while . . . you will find that the members of your department will be ready to help you at all times . . . and we all hope that your entry into the service marks the commencement for you of a long, happy, and successful career."

To the older entrant the president emphasises the "excellent spirit of comradeship" throughout the service, and gives the assurance that "every effort will be made to make you feel quickly at home and to assist you in acquiring local knowledge and picking up the threads of your new appointment."

Tell That to Conference

EXPLAINING, in a note to Headquarters, why he was resigning from the Association, a member wrote:

"NALGO is becoming too much of a trade union—and too interested in politics!"

"PROgress" Again

AFTER 18 months' hibernation, NALGO's bulletin of public relations, "PROgress," has reappeared as a printed magazine, packed with information of interest and value to branch and municipal PROs. This summer issue—it will appear quarterly — contains five contributed articles by experts in public relations and education, as well as news from the branches and districts, details of local authority enterprise, and ideas for further activities. Every branch secretary has been sent one complimentary copy, but additional copies may be had from Headquarters at an annual subscription (for four issues) of 2s.

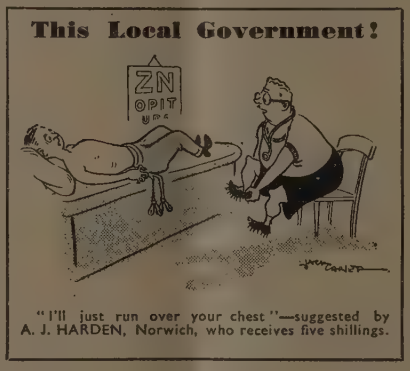
Perseverance Pays

TWO years of patient but persistent negotiation by NALGO's Eastern district officer has reaped its reward, and the staff of the Middle Level Commissioners—a small drainage authority —will at last get Charter benefits.

When the Board was first asked to adopt the Charter, in May, 1946, it argued that the staff was too small, and repeated representations failed to move it. The claim was taken to the Eastern provincial council appeals committee, which, in April, 1947, decided that the Charter was applicable to the staff. But the Board rejected its ruling, and NALGO declared a dispute under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order, which was referred to the appeals committee of the N.J.C. That committee also decided in favour of the staff, and in April this year the Commissioners gave way, with the result that their staff will now enjoy Charter conditions with retrospective effect from April, 1946.

Branch Editors Exchange Ideas

THE Metropolitan district is undoubtedly leading the way in branch-magazine enterprise. Not only does it produce one-third of the 160 magazines in production to-day; its editors are keen to exchange ideas on their work, and have hit on a happy way of doing so by persuading their branches to act as hosts at week-end conferences. The first two conferences were held at Croydon and Barnet, and on April 24, **Hampstead** branch entertained about 25. At this meeting,



"I'll just run over your chest"—suggested by A. J. HARDEN, Norwich, who receives five shillings.

J. Y. MORFEY, editor of "Citizen," criticised the magazines represented thoroughly and constructively, and four editors exposed their own production methods to the criticism of their colleagues. A fourth meeting is to be held in the autumn, at the invitation of **Ilford.**

"Citizen" Now Available

TALKING of "Citizen," I have good news for the many members whose desire to read this lively review of local government and the social services has hitherto been disappointed because demand for copies has greatly exceeded supply. Thanks to the decision to publish every second month, instead of monthly, many more copies are now available, and orders can again be received.

The current number contains a special feature on the Boundary Commission's Report, a lively plea for municipal trading, and news of housing, education, health, and social services. Readers interested should write to Walter King, Ltd., 11, Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. Single copies cost 1s. 7d. post free, and an annual subscription 9s. 6d.

16 Lectures in 48 Hours!

DR. F. H. SMITH, clerk to the Woking U.D.C. and honorary director of studies to the Metropolitan District Committee, gave 16 lectures in 48 hours during an intensive week-end course recently organised by the South Eastern area education committee for members taking the promotion examination. The school was at Pulborough, but of the 57 students, some came from as far afield as Cumberland, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and North Wales.

Last NALGO Exams

THE last NALGO examinations—they are to be discontinued now that the promotion examination has been approved—are to be held in 1950 (intermediate) and 1951 (final). Enrolments are now being accepted.

More Summer Schools

RESIDENTIAL courses grow ever more popular. I have just heard of two new ones. The Educational Centres Association, in conjunction with the University of Oxford Extra-Mural Delegacy, is running a series during the summer at Westham House, Nr. Stratford, on community educational activities; details can be got from the secretary of the Association at 8, Endsleigh Gardens, London, W.C.1. Burton Manor College, Burton, Wirral, Cheshire, runs courses throughout the year and has a varied programme for the June-October period, including "Local Government in England—its History and Scope" June 26—July 9). The Warden, Dr. Andrew Brown, will be glad to give full details.

N.P.S. Will Carry On

RECENT letters to Headquarters suggest that some members are under the impression that the benefits which will be available to all under the National Insurance Scheme on July 5 will make the schemes of the NALGO Provident Society unnecessary. This is not so. The Society asks me to point out that, as the Government itself has emphasised, national insurance will provide only the minimum protection in time of sickness and is intended to supplement, not to supplant, private insurance. The Provident Society will therefore continue to distribute its benefits to members (who can get details from correspondents or Headquarters).

Memorial Fund Now £29,000

CONTRIBUTIONS to the Association's War Memorial Fund now exceed £29,000. —but £11,000 is still needed. **Camberwell and Sheffield** have joined the growing list of branches which have reached their target of 6s. a member.

"Knole Lodge," the War Memorial convalescent home at Bournemouth, has been full ever since it was featured in the April "L.G.S.," with the result that the many retired members who have applied for admission under the new rule allowing them to have holidays there without submitting a medical certificate have been disappointed. But their chance will come as soon as there are vacancies.

No Blazer Material

MY apologies to the many readers who were misled by two misplaced brackets in last month's announcement about NALGO Colours into thinking that Headquarters had blazer material for sale. The announcement was intended to mean that it had scarves, one kind made of wool, at 12s. 6d. each and one coupon, the other kind made of blazer material, at £1 1s. and two coupons. But there is no loose blazer material.

Mr. John Chaston

JOHN CHASTON, town clerk of Kettering and pioneer member of NALGO, has retired. His work for the Association continued without a break for 40 years, during which time he was secretary of the Kettering branch for 20 years, chairman of the Eastern and East Midlands district committees, and a member of the National Executive Council. For six years he was chairman of the regional B and O Fund committee and chairman of the N.C.I. committee, and from 1932 to 1938 was chairman of the education committee. Last year, he was president of the branch.

"Jackass" Promoted

CONGRATULATIONS to HARRY NORTON, better known to "L.G.S." readers as "Jackass," on his appointment as national negotiating secretary of the Electrical Power Engineers' Association. A former chairman of the Sheffield Municipal Officers' Guild and editor of its journal, he sat on the N.E.C. from 1943 to 1945.

Obituary

WE regret to record the deaths of:

HUGH BEGG, founder member of the **Lanarkshire** branch. Between 1913 and 1936 he was president and chairman of the branch, chairman of the Scottish District Committee, member of the N.E.C. and a trustee of the Association. He presented the "Hugh Begg" Trophy for the annual bowls competition.

ALEX HARLEY, president of the **Dunfermline** branch, and a former member of the **Fife** branch. A prominent member of the branch since its formation, he was writing his report for an approaching general meeting when he was taken ill and died within two hours. He was 50.

House Exchange

Aylesbury—House, for house in **Bedford**—Bradley, 92, Walton Way, Aylesbury, Bucks.

Boston, Lincs.—Semi-det. mod., 3 bed for similar in **Northampton**—Hearn, 39, Rochford Crescent, Boston.

COTTISH NOTES

Consolidation Terms Agreed : First Stage in Abolition of Grouping System.

THE Joint Industrial Council has decided to consolidate bonus into salary for local government officers in Scotland and to extend the General and Higher I Divisions of the Scottish Charter.

It has also approved the first stage of the abolition of the unpopular grouping system—by which officers in smaller and poorer authorities not less than those in the larger and wealthier ones—and has agreed increases for officers under 21 of from £23 to £44 a year for men, and £12 to £29 for women, in group 1, with proportional increases for those under 21 in other groups.

Consolidation of salaries and bonus, the extension of the General Division to cover officers up to 32 years of age, instead of up to 30 as hitherto, and the addition to Higher Division 1 of one extra increment, will take effect from the beginning of the second half of the local authorities' financial year, 1948. Details are to be worked out by the Council's executive committee.

Provision has been made in the agreement for an adjustment of remuneration, which, but for consolidation, could have been made in the war increase, in accordance with the decision of the Council in September, 1946.

As from November, 1949, officers of local authorities paying group 3 salaries — the lowest category—will get an increase because that group will then cease to exist. Thereafter, all authorities will be graded in two groups only. The abolition of group 2 and the creation of a single scale for all Scottish officers is to be considered later.

In the meantime, efforts must be made to secure a higher degree of uniformity than at present in groups 1 and 2. For example, all large burghs should be in the same group. So should the larger industrial counties.

Junior scales are to be improved from the beginning of the financial year 1948-49. The new scales, including both the bonus (consolidated) and the new increases, are:

Group		*Age* 16	17	18	19	20
1	(Men)	£130	£145	£160	£175	£190
2	.. .. ..	£125	£140	£155	£170	£185
3	.. .. ..	£115	£130	£145	£160	£475
1	(Women) ..	£100	£115	£130	£145	£160
2	.. .. ..	£95	£110	£125	£140	£155
3	.. .. ..	£90	£105	£120	£135	£150

The executive committee is also to discuss anomalies in the A.P.T. Division and in the scales for miscellaneous grades which were related to the General Division and therefore need adjustment.

Arrears of Salary.—The Council agreed that where an officer leaves the service of an authority after an increase under the Scottish Charter becomes due to him but before it is paid, he is entitled to the accrued arrears.

Appeals Machinery.—This is to be considered in the light of a report submitted to the Council describing the machinery provided in England and the information made available to provincial council appeals committees.

Local Joint Committees.—The staff side of the Council will discuss shortly the establishment of local joint committees. The provision for the establishment of staff committees for officers of the nationalised electricity service adds strength to our claim for similar machinery for local government staffs.

N A L G O's Scottish Summer School.—The syllabus and enrolment forms for the N A L G O Summer School, to be held at St. Andrews University from August 21 to 28, will shortly be circulated to branches.

Approved Society Goes : How to Claim Benefits

ON July 5, the N A L G O Approved Society will cease to exist after 36 years of efficient service unsurpassed by any other society of its kind. On that day, the assets of all approved societies will be transferred to the Ministry of National Insurance, and in anticipation of the transfer, the society has issued the following instructions to branches.

The Society passed all claims for sickness and disablement benefit to local offices of the Ministry on May 21. Members on the funds at that date have been notified of the address of the office to which their claims were sent and asked to forward all future medical certificates there, so that benefit may continue.

Until July 3, however, local correspondents should still address all new claims for sickness and disablement benefit to the Society at 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, N.W.1, since it has to notify the Ministry of the rate of benefit payable. As soon as a member is informed of the address of the office to which his claim has been sent, he should forward all medical evidence to that office and not to local correspondents.

Additional benefits will continue to be paid by the Society until July 3, and all claims for such benefits should be addressed to it direct.

"N A L G O House," the Society's convalescent home at Matlock, will be closed to members on June 19, to enable the domestic staff to clear up their duties and be free to find new jobs.

The Approved Society was formed in April, 1912, for the benefit of local government officers who had just become compulsorily insured under the National Health Insurance Act, 1911. Miss R. FICKEN, who has been in charge of it since 1917, well remembers how, in the early days, she and one junior ran it from one table in a room in Caxton Hall, Westminster. Then, a single clerk dealt with all sickness claims on one morning of the week; now, the same job takes four clerks the whole week, working full time.

In the early days, claims were paid by postal-order, but since 1930 they have been paid by cheque. In all, Miss FICKEN estimates that some three-and-a-half million cheques have been sent to members in monthly benefit payments.

"N A L G O House" was bought for £1,700, and opened in 1923 by SAM LORD, president of the Society for 26 years.

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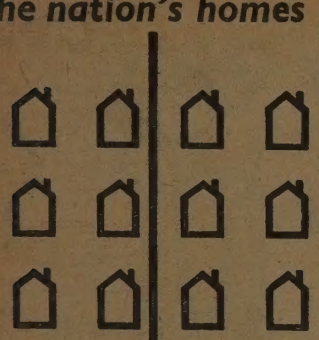

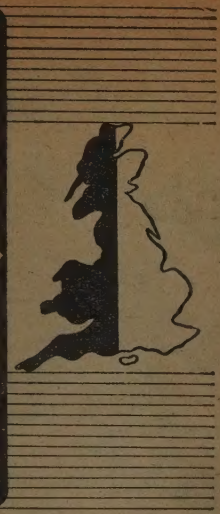

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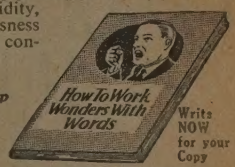

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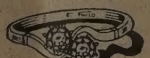
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